June 11, 1979

THE NEW YORKER

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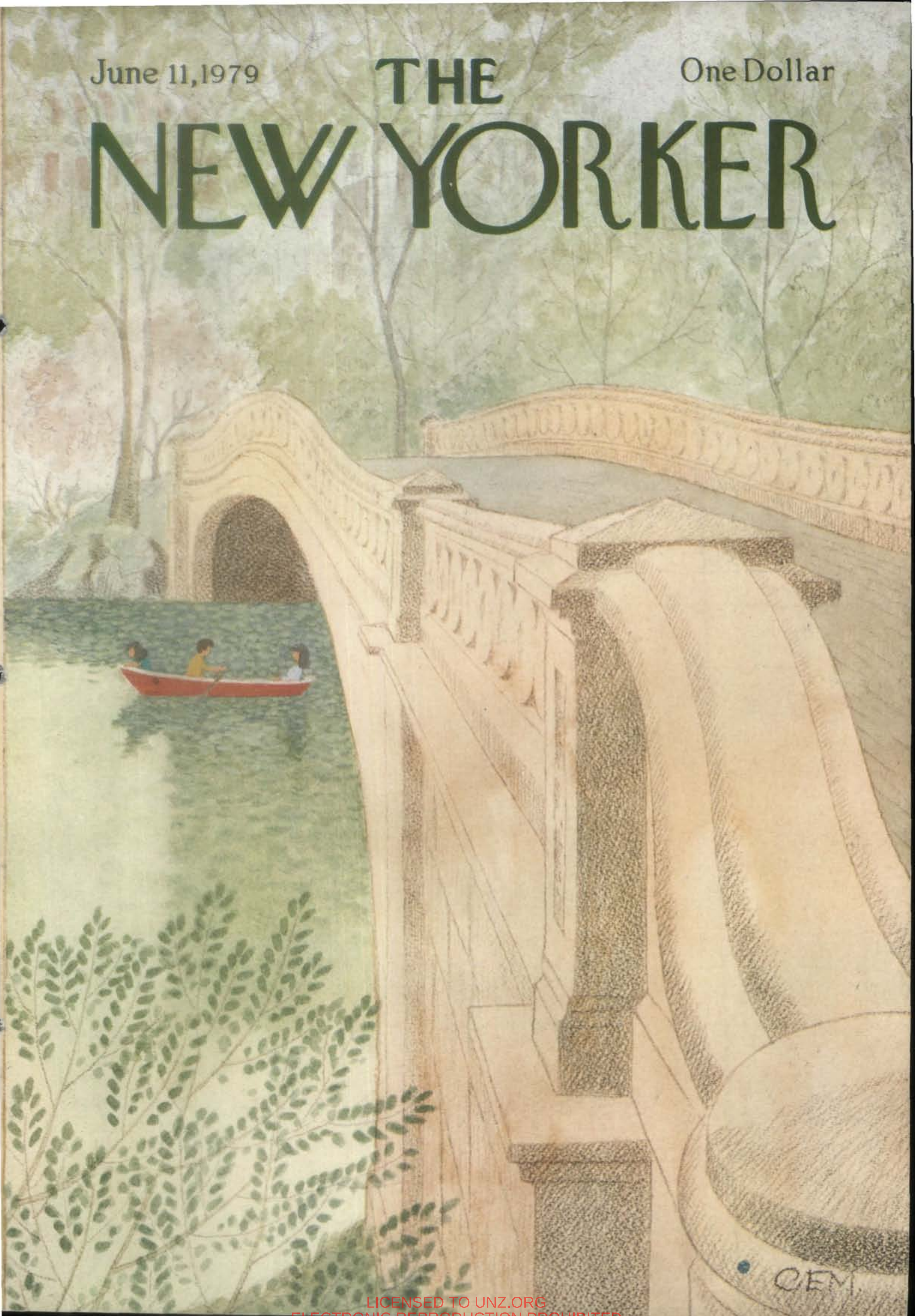

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

A CONSCIENTIOUS CALENDAR OF EVENTS OF INTEREST

THE THEATRE

PLAYS AND MUSICALS

Bedroom Farce—A very funny play by Alan Ayckbourn, about four married couples of assorted ages and appetites. Directed by the author and Peter Hall. (Reviewed in our issue of 4/9/79.) (Brooks Atkinson, 256 W. 47th St. 245-3430. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

Bruce Forsyth on Broadway—A one-man show by this British entertainer—actor, singer, comic, who also dances, plays piano, and does impressions. (Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 245-4878. Monday, June 11, at 8 [preview]; Tuesday, June 12, at 7 [opening]; and Wednesday through Saturday, June 13-16, at 8.)

Chinchilla—Michael Cristofer in a play by Robert David MacDonald, imported from Glasgow. (Marymount Manhattan Theatre, 221 E. 71st St. 730-0794. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 3. Closes Sunday, June 17.)

Dispatches—A misguided effort by Elizabeth Swados to base a musical on Michael Herr's volume of reports from Vietnam. (4/30/79) (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 677-6350. Nightly, except Mondays, at 7:45. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 2:45.)

The Elephant Man—This absorbing play by Bernard Pomerance is based on an actual episode. A freak too repulsive even for display at street fairs finds refuge in a London hospital in Whitechapel from 1886 until his death in 1890. The action covers his progress there and the questions that his progress raises. Jack Hofsiss directed the superior performance; Philip Anglim is the Elephant Man, Kevin Conway is his attending surgeon, and Carole Shelley is the actress Mrs. Kendal. (1/29/79 and 4/30/79) (Booth, 222 W. 45th St. 246-5969. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

Eubie!—A captivating old-fashioned revue, with lots of new-fashioned dancing and singing. The music is culled from the lifework of Eubie Blake, still merrily among us at ninety-six. (10/2/78) (Ambassador, 215 W. 49th St. 541-6490. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Getting Out—The two heroines of Marsha Norman's affecting and accomplished first play are a young woman who has been released from prison on parole and her younger disruptive, delinquent self. They are very well acted by Susan Kingsley and Pamela Reed, under the direction of Jon Jory. (11/6/78) (Theatre de Lys, 121 Christopher St. 924-8782. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 10; and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Saturdays at 6 and Sundays at 3.)

Happy Days—A revival of Beckett's two-character play, with Irene Worth and George Voskovec, directed by Andrei Serban. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 677-6350. Nightly, except Mondays, at 8. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 3.)

I Remember Mama—Liv Ullmann is the star of this sentimental chromolithograph of a musical laid in San Francisco in the early nineteen-hundreds. There are a few old-fashioned songs, with music by Richard Rodgers and lyrics by Martin Charnin and Raymond Jessel. The thin book is by Thomas Meehan. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 246-0730. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

Knockout—Danny Aiello and Edward O'Neill perform splendidly in this old-fashioned and not very plausible melodrama about life among the Italian-Americans in Hoboken. The author is Louis La Russo II. (5/14/79) (Helen Hayes, 210 W. 46th St. 246-6380. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

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Letters Home—A play by Rose Leiman Goldemberg. (American Place, 111 W. 46th St. 247-0393. Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday at 10, and Thursday at 9. Matinées Saturday at 2 and Sunday at 3. Closes Sunday, June 10.)

Light Opera of Manhattan—Presenting **ten nights in a barroom**, by T. S. Arthur. Opens Wednesday, June 6, and will run through Sunday, July 1. (Eastside, 334 E. 74th St. 861-2288. Wednesdays through Saturdays at 8:30. Matinées Wednesdays at 2 and Saturdays and Sundays at 4.)

Lone Star and **Pvt. Wars**—A pair of comedies by James McLure. Previews Wednesday, June 6. Opens officially on Thursday, June 7. (Century Theatre, 235 W. 46th St. 354-6644. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8; opening-night curtain at 6:45. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Loose Ends—Kevin Kline and Roxanne Hart in a play by Michael Weller. Directed by Alan Schneider. Opens Wednesday, June 6. (Circle in the Square, Broadway at 50th St. 581-0720. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8; opening-night curtain at 6:30. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

El Macho—A domestic farce about a Puerto Rican woman in this city who is brought dismaying news by friends and neighbors about the private life of her husband, lying in a coma in a local hospital as they slowly chip away his reputation. Joseph Lizardi, the playwright, shows considerable comic ingenuity; although the first act gets a bit lumpy, the second takes off and stays aloft. The acting, under Harold Scott's skillful direction, is always credible, and often better than that. Teresa Yenque is the woman, Ricardo Matamoros is her grown son, and Martha de la Cruz is very funny as a blind neighbor somewhat the worse for rum. Performances in English Wednesdays through Fridays at 7:30; in Spanish on Saturdays at 7:30 and 10:30, and Sundays at 3 and 7:30. (Puerto Rican Traveling Theatre, 304 W. 47th St. 354-1293. Closes Sunday, June 24.)

The Madwoman of Central Park West—Phyllis Newman in a one-woman musical comedy written by herself and Arthur Laurents (who also directed), and including songs by Bernstein, Sondheim, Mary Rodgers, and Comden

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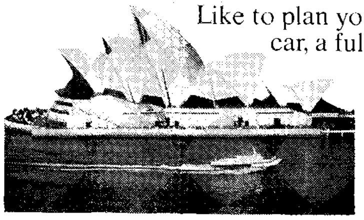

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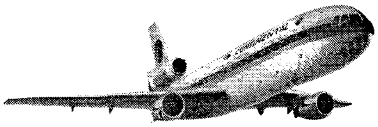

The Proud Bird with the Golden Tail.

CONTINENTAL AIRLINES

U.S.A./Canada/Mexico/Hawaii/Micronesia/Australia/New Zealand/Fiji/Samoa/and the Orient.

GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

and Green. Previews through Wednesday matinée, June 13. Opens officially on Wednesday, June 13, at 6:15. (22 Steps, Broadway at 48th St. 541-6162. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

On Golden Pond—Ernest Thompson's funny, witty, sympathetic play about an old couple spending the summer in Maine is excellently performed by Frances Sternhagen and Tom Aldredge in the leading roles. Craig Anderson is the admirable director. (9/25/78) (New Apollo, 234 W. 43rd St. 921-8558. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2. May close Saturday, June 9.)

Richard III—Al Pacino has the title role in a limited engagement of Shakespeare's tragedy. Directed by David Wheeler. Previews through Saturday, June 9. Opens officially on Sunday, June 10. (Cort, 138 W. 48th St. 489-6392. Nightly, except Mondays, at 8; opening-night curtain at 6. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

Saints Alive!—A comedy by Charles Carmello. (Actors Playhouse, 100 Seventh Ave. S., at Sheridan Sq. 265-7650. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

Saravá—Can a woman find happiness with two concurrent husbands, especially if one is a ghost? Not according to this oversized and overheated musical, which stars Tovah Feldshuh. (3/5/79) (Broadway Theatre, Broadway at 53rd St. 247-7260. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Signs of Life—A play by Joan Schenkar. (American Place, 111 W. 46th St. 247-0393. Nightly at 7:30; on Thursday at 6:30. Closes Sunday, June 10.)

Strider: The Story of a Horse—The recollections of a piebald gelding. The show, a musical adaptation of a short story by Tolstoy, has been dramatized (after a fashion) by Mark Rozovsky, and, needless to say, the gelding, as performed by Gerald Hiken, embodies any number of Tolstoy's ideas on any number of matters. Most of the actors, who do well, double as horses and people, and the results are sometimes effective, sometimes humorous, and often painfully cute. The music (originally composed by Mr. Rozovsky and S. Vetkin and arranged by Norman L. Berman) is consistently delightful. Robert Kalfin was both co-translator and co-director. (Westside, 407 W. 43rd St. 541-8394. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3. Closes Sunday, June 17.)

Sweeney Todd—A mass murderer in nineteenth-century London is the peculiar protagonist of this boisterous musical, to which Stephen Sondheim has contributed something like twenty-five songs. With Len Cariou as the murderer and Angela Lansbury as his contented accomplice. Harold Prince directed. (3/12/79) (Uris, 51st St. west of Broadway. 586-6510. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

They're Playing Our Song—A two-speed musical with Robert Klein and Lucie Arnaz, in the course of which two nearly mindless young people meet and bicker. Neil Simon is the author of the book, Marvin Hamlisch wrote the music, and the lyrics are by Carole Bayer Sager. (2/26/79) (Imperial, 249 W. 45th St. 265-4311. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

Up in One—The cabaret singer Peter Allen in a parade of songs that demonstrate what an expert cabaret singer he is. Broadway is not his natural home, but he is evidently happy to be there. (6/4/79) (Biltmore, 261 W. 47th St. 582-5340. Mondays through Thursdays at 8, and Fridays and Saturdays at 7 and 10.)

Wake Up, It's Time to Go to Bed!—Keith Carradine and Ellen Greene head the cast in this concert of contemporary music conceived, written, and directed by Carson Kievman. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 677-6350. Nightly, except Mondays, at 8. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 3.)

Whoopee!—A musical that is over half a century old, and looks and sounds its age. Poor little Charles Repole is its hapless star, in the role once played by once-famous Eddie Cantor. (2/26/79) (ANTA Theatre, 245 W. 52nd St. 246-6270. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

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Whose Life Is It Anyway?—A brilliant performance by Tom Conti in a play by Brian Clark about a young man who believes he has the right to choose death over life. A grim-sounding topic, but the playwright has invested it with humor and warmth. (4/30/79) (Trafalgar, 208 W. 41st St. 921-8000. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

Long Runs—**ain't misbehavin'**: A well-nigh perfect show based on the performing career of Fats Waller. (Plymouth, 236 W. 45th St. 730-1760. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.) . . . **annie**: A long musical derived from the celebrated comic-strip characters Little Orphan Annie and Daddy Warbucks. With Alice Ghostley as an alcoholic scold. (Alvin, 250 W. 52nd St. 757-8646. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **the best little whorehouse in texas**: A cheerful, cheering, and foolish musical about a bordello called the Chicken Ranch. Tommy Tune was the choreographer, Carol Hall wrote the score, and Larry L. King and Peter Masterson wrote the libretto. (46th Street Theatre, 226 W. 46th St. 246-0246. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.) . . . **chapter two**: A comedy by Neil Simon, less funny than most of its predecessors. Laurence Luckinbill plays a miserable widower who suddenly finds a new love and doesn't know what to do with her, except to marry her and make her as miserable as he has been. (Eugene O'Neill, 230 W. 49th St. 246-0220. Nightly, except Sundays and Thursdays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **a chorus line**: A group of young dancers audition for a handful of chorus jobs in a show, and by the time the evening is over we know everything about all of them. (Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 246-5990. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.) . . . **da**: In Hugh Leonard's entertaining play, a dramatist, back in Ireland for the funeral of his father, is persistently haunted by the stubborn, funny corpse. David Leary is the dramatist, and Barnard Hughes his late Da. (Morosco, 217 W. 45th St. 246-6230. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **dancin'**: Superb young dancers (who can also sing) carry out the witty and sexy notions of the great show-biz choreographer Bob Fosse. (Broadhurst, 235 W. 44th St. 247-0472. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **deathtrap**: A thriller almost as clever as "Sleuth." The author is Ira Levin, and the star is Stacy Keach. (Music Box, 239 W. 45th St. 246-4636. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **dracula**: Raúl Juliá co-stars with Edward Gorey's sets and costumes in this highly entertaining revival of a twenties melodrama. (Martin Beck, 302 W. 45th St. 246-6363. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **the fantasticks**: 7,944 performances so far. (Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Sundays at 3.) . . . **gemini**: In Albert Innaurato's delightful comedy, a Harvard undergraduate, son of an Italian-American laborer, is paid a surprise visit by a pair of his classmates—a well-to-do brother and sister from Cambridge—and is thrown into a panic that at first appears to be social but is actually sexual. (Little Theatre, 240 W. 44th St. 221-6425. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.) . . . **grease**: A musical that parodies, by faithful imitation, the songs and dances of the nineteen-fifties. (Royale, 242 W. 45th St. 245-5760. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **i'm getting my act together and taking it on the road**: A nightclub singer with strong feminist views celebrates her thirty-ninth birthday by auditioning her new act for her dismayed manager. This somewhat disappointing musical by Nancy Ford (score) and Gretchen Cryer (book and lyrics) was directed by Word Baker. (Circle in the Square Downtown, 159 Bleecker St. 254-6330. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.) . . . **mummenschanz**: A merry evening of pantomime with three masked players. The masks are ingenious and surprising and so are the ideas of this nimble troupe. (Bijou, 209 W. 45th St. 221-8500. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **oh! calcutta!**: A collection of short sketches that purport to give us a refreshing view of sex and do not. (Edison, 240 W. 47th St. 757-7164. Mondays through Wednesdays, and Fridays, at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 9:30; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Wednesdays at 2.) . . . **the passion of dracula**: An unpretentious, entertaining adaptation (in the British manner) of Bram Stoker's old thriller. Bob Hall and David Richmond are the adapters. Peter Bennett is the commendable director. (Cherry Lane, 38 Commerce St. 989-2020. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 8. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

MISCELLANY

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Beatlemania—A multimedia and live-music program about the sixties, with four musicians doing thirty-seven songs written by John Lennon and Paul McCartney. (Lunt-Fontanne, 205 W. 46th St. 586-5555. Wednesdays through Fridays at 8, and Saturdays at 7 and 10. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3; special matinée Thursday, June 7, at 2.)

New York Gilbert and Sullivan Players—Presenting "The Mikado." (Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. Thursday and Friday, June 7-8, at 8; Saturday, June 9, at 2 and 8; Sunday, June 10, at 2 and 7. For information about tickets, call 724-9159.)

DANCE

New York City Ballet—Tentative schedule—Wednesday evening, June 6: "Divertimento No. 15," "In the Night," and "Bournonville Divertissements." . . . ¶ Thursday evening, June 7: A benefit performance (for tickets, call 877-4700, Ext. 346), including the preview of a new ballet by Jerome Robbins. . . . ¶ Friday evening, June 8: "Jewels." . . . ¶ Saturday matinée, June 9: "In the Night," "Le Tombeau de Couperin," and "Bournon-

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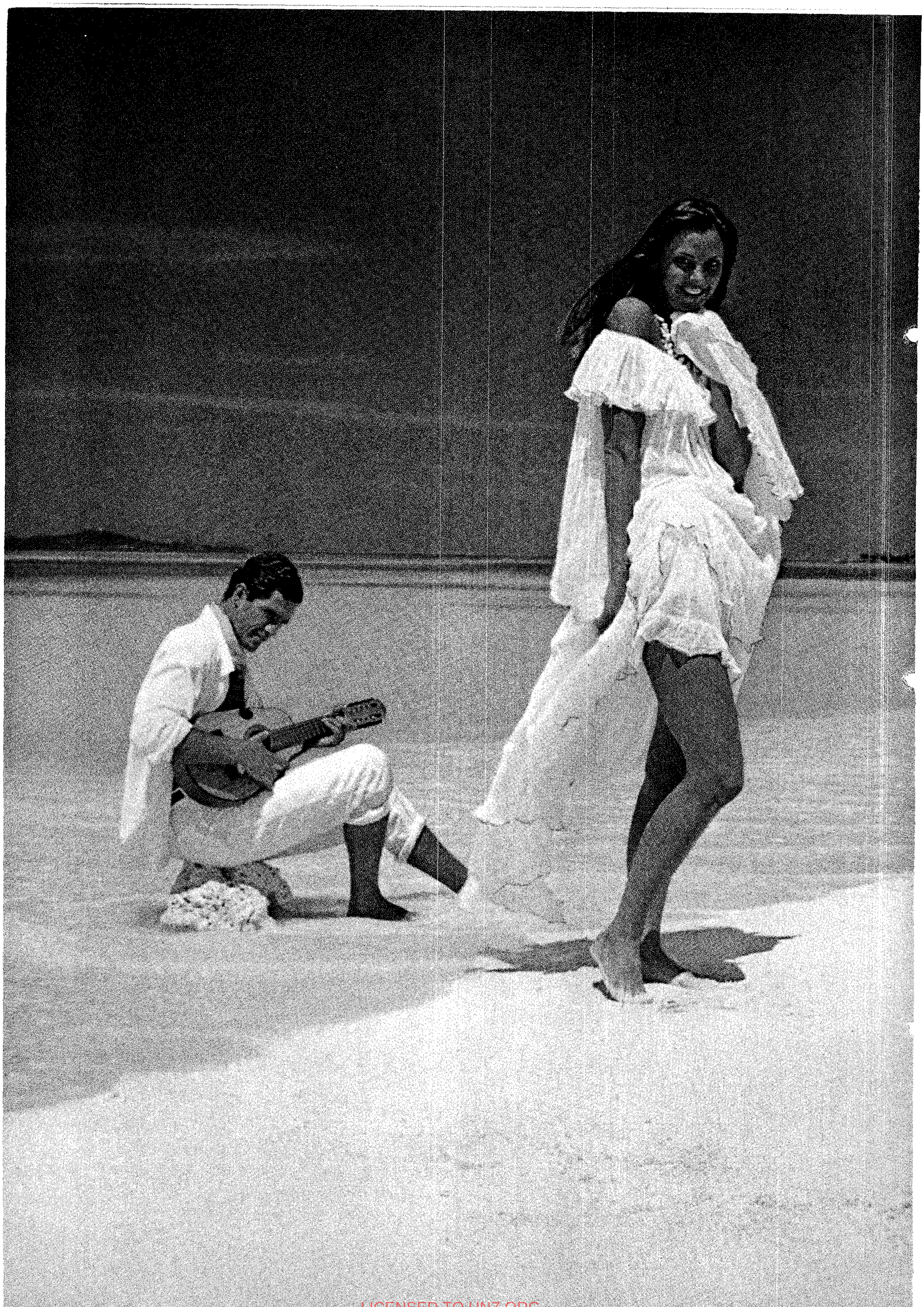

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ville Divertissements."... ¶ Saturday evening, June 9: "Donizetti Variations," "Kammermusik No. 2," and "Vienna Waltzes."... ¶ Sunday matinée, June 10: "Dances at a Gathering" and "Vienna Waltzes."... ¶ Sunday evening, June 10: "La Source," "Kammermusik No. 2," and "Union Jack."... ¶ Tuesday evening, June 12: "Donizetti Variations," "Afternoon of a Faun," "Sonatine," and "Union Jack."... ¶ Wednesday evening, June 13: "Stars and Stripes," "Calcium Light Night," "Pas de Deux," and "La Valse."... ¶ Thursday evening, June 14: "Donizetti Variations," an unnamed ballet (première), and "Dances at a Gathering."... ¶ Friday evening, June 15: "La Source," "Kammermusik No. 2," and "Vienna Waltzes."... ¶ *Saturday matinée, June 16:* The new ballet, "Monumentum pro Gesualdo/Movements for Piano and Orchestra," and "Dances at a Gathering."... ¶ Saturday evening, June 16: "Stars and Stripes," "Afternoon of a Faun," "Ballo della Regina," and "The Concert." (New York State Theatre, Lincoln Center. 877-4727. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7. Matinées Saturdays at 2 and Sundays at 1. Through Sunday, July 1.)

American Ballet Theatre—Final performances of the engagement—Wednesday evening, June 6: "Don Quixote; or, Kitri's Wedding." ... ¶ Thursday evening, June 7: "The Leaves Are Fading," "Désir," "Miss Julie," and "Etudes."... ¶ Friday evening, June 8: "The Leaves Are Fading," "Undertow," and "Etudes."... ¶ Saturday matinée, June 9: "La Bayadère," "Pierrot Lunaire," and "Etudes."... ¶ Saturday evening, June 9: "The Tiller in the Fields," "Contredances," "Pas de Deux," and "Theme and Variations." (Metropolitan Opera House. 580-9830. Evenings at 8. Matinées at 2.)

Stuttgart Ballet—Opening performances of a four-week engagement that will run through Saturday, July 7—Tuesday evening, June 12, and Wednesday matinée and evening, June 13: "Romeo and Juliet."... ¶ Thursday and Friday evenings, June 14-15, and Saturday matinée and evening, June 16: "Eugene Onegin." (Metropolitan Opera House. 580-9830. Evenings at 8; opening-night curtain at 7:30. Matinées at 2.)

Daniel Nagrin—Presenting the première of "Jacaranda," a solo dance with a (spoken) text by Sam Shepard, plus "Getting Well." (Playhouse 46, 423 W. 46th St. 246-7277. Thursdays, Fridays, and Sundays at 8, and Saturdays at 7 and 10. Closes Sunday, June 17.)

Dianne McIntyre's Sounds in Motion—"Life's Force," "The Last Days of the Down Home Boogies," "Circles," "Union," "Piano Peace," "Long Gones," "Reins," and "As Is." (Henry Street Settlement's Playhouse, 466 Grand St. 766-9334. Friday and Saturday, June 8-9, at 8, and Sunday, June 10, at 3.)

DanceAfrica '79—Two performances of African-American dances—Saturday, June 9, at 8: Charles Moore and Dances & Drums of Africa and the International Afrikan American Ballet.... ¶ Sunday, June 10, at 2: Dinizulu and His African Dancers, Drummers, and Singers; Charles Moore and Dances & Drums of Africa; the Chuck Davis Dance Company; and the International Afrikan American Ballet. (Brooklyn Academy of Music, 30 Lafayette Ave. 636-4100.)

Mary Anthony Dance Theatre—A program of contemporary dance. (Theatre of the Riverside Church, Riverside Dr. at 120th St. 864-2929. Thursday through Saturday, June 14-16, at 8, and Sunday, June 17, at 2.)

Great Dance Stars on Film—Two performances of a retrospective of dance films and dance excerpts from other films, with commentary (live) by Walter Terry. The dancers include Agnes de Mille, Anna Pavlova, Léonide Massine, Alexandra Danilova, Martha Graham, Rudolf Nureyev, Margot Fonteyn, Ruth St. Denis, Ted Shawn, and José Limón. (Alice Tully Hall. Thursday, June 14, at 6 and 8:30. For tickets, call 582-7500, Mondays through Fridays, 9 to 5.)

NIGHT LIFE

(A highly arbitrary listing, in which bold-face type is used to pick out a few of the more notable performers in town.... ¶ Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives that are subject to last-minute change; it is therefore always advisable to call ahead.)

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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Beefsteak Charlie's, 55 Fifth Ave., at 12th St. (675-4720)—A dark lounge and bar with a conscientious music policy. Pianist Richard Sussman will lead a quintet Thursday and Friday, June 7-8; on Saturday and Sunday, June 9-10, pianist Barry Miles and his group, Silverlight, will perform; and on Wednesday and Thursday, June 13-14, bop-inspired vocalist Janet Lawson will sing with her quintet. Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays at nine-thirty and eleven-thirty, and Fridays and Saturdays at ten-thirty and twelve-thirty. Dining.

Bottom Line, 15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (228-6300)—The lineup: **LOU REED**, singer, songwriter, and the godfather of new-wave rock, is here Wednesday, June 6 (his shows are already sold out); on Friday and Saturday, June 8-9, electric violinist **MICHAL URBANIAK** and his vocalist wife **URSZULA DUDZIAK** will perform with their jazz-rock quintet; on Tuesday and Wednesday, June 12-13, jazz-rock guitarist Lee Ritenour will lead his West Coast band; and on Friday and Saturday, June 15-16, singer and guitarist Dan Hicks will be present with his rock band, which will alternate with rock singer Terry Garthwaite. Shows Sundays through Thursdays at eight-thirty and eleven-thirty, and Fridays and Saturdays at nine and midnight. Dining.

Bradley's, 70 University Pl., at 11th St. (228-6440)—It seems as though Bradley's is everybody's favorite neighborhood bar, even people who don't live in the neighborhood. Pianist **HILTON RUIZ** and his bassist are present through Saturday, June 9; on Sunday, June 10, pianist **ROLAND HANNA** will move in for eight nights. Music from nine-thirty. Dining.

Cachaça, 403 E. 62nd St. (688-8501)—Nightly homage to Brazil's Tin Pan Alley, which, with composers like Jobim, Bonfa, Gil, and Gilberto, is more like a *rua d'ouro*. The room is chic and urbane, cleverly done up with mirrors, plants, and subtle lighting—it all somehow suggests a nighttime view of Rio. A capable trio and a singer perform bossa nova and other sambas from eleven; before and between sets, there is recorded American and Brazilian disco music and Carnaval music. The club is open nightly, except Mondays, from eight to four. Dining and dancing.

Carlyle Hotel, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600)—**BOBBY SHORT** holds court, which includes his two aides, bassist **BEVERLY PEER** and drummer **GENE GAMMAGE**, in the Café Carlyle Tuesdays through Saturdays at ten and midnight. Dining.... ¶ The Bemelmans Bar belongs to pianist **BARBARA CARROLL** nightly, except Sundays, from nine-forty-five to one.

Carnegie Tavern, 165 W. 56th St. (757-9522)—Quiet and elegant, **ELLIS LARKINS**, in tuxedo and ruffled shirt, slips onto the bench behind a highly polished August Förster piano at about eight and commandeers the great instrument in his delicate, understated way. Customers are advised to whisper during Larkins' sets. Nightly, except Sundays, until midnight. Dining.

CBGB & OMFUG, 315 Bowery, at Bleecker St. (982-4052)—A pioneer new-wave (formerly punk) rock club, and still one of the most important outlets. The bands: Come On and Richard Deans, on Wednesday, June 6; the Plasmatics, Thursday through Saturday, June 7-9; and **JOHN CALE**, Wednesday through Saturday, June 13-16. Nightly, from nine-thirty. Monday is showcase night.

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Cookery, 21 University Pl., at 8th St. (674-4450)—**ALBERTA HUNTER**, a rocking, funny, full-voiced octogenarian blues singer and songwriter, performs with pianist Gerald Cook and bassist Jimmy Lewis Tuesdays through Thursdays at eight-thirty and ten-thirty, and Fridays and Saturdays at eight-thirty, ten-thirty, and twelve-fifteen. Sunday and Monday, June 10-11, will be given over to blues and boogie-woogie specialist **SAMMY PRICE**, who will be at the piano between eight and one. Dining.

Crawdaddy, Vanderbilt Ave. at 45th St. (687-1860)—**DOC CHEATHAM**, a septuagenarian trumpeter with his clear, easy tone still intact, works with pianist Chuck Folds and Jackie Williams, a good drummer, Mondays through Fridays from six to eleven. Jambalaya, crawfish pie, and seafood gumbo. Closed Saturdays and Sundays.

David K's, 1115 Third Ave., at 65th St. (371-9090)—**HUGH SHANNON**, the international café-society singer, holds forth in this singer-pianist's room—all the tables are close to the piano, and all the customers are usually very attentive. He works from nine-thirty to two Tuesdays through Saturdays.

Downey's, 705 Eighth Ave., at 44th St. (757-0186)—**DARDANELLE**, a delight of a singer-pianist, has moved into this smallish, square, tartan-carpeted room. She has a relaxed, living-room (but wholly professional) delivery and perfect articulation, and she plays wonderfully fluid piano solos. Nightly, except Sundays, from eight to midnight.

Eddie Condon's, 144 W. 54th St. (265-8277)—A traditional-jazz sextet plays every night but Sunday from nine-thirty. On Sunday, June 10, tenor saxophonist **SCOTT HAMILTON** will head a quintet, from about eight-thirty. Dining.

Fat Tuesday's, 190 Third Ave., at 17th St. (533-7902)—A surrealistic entrance: a green-tinted Plexiglas door leads to a very narrow hallway with corrugated-metal walls and a heavy embossed-metal floor. Upon arriving downstairs, one is immediately struck by the plushness of the room, which houses a bar, tables, and some of the best jazz in the city. **DAVID AMRAM**, a *French-horn soloist, a composer,* a musical multinationalist, an occasional singer, and an eternal beatnik, leads a quartet through Saturday, June 9. Tuesday through Saturday, June 12-16, **BARNEY KESSEL** and **HERB ELLIS**, the Bob and Ray of guitar duos, will be on hand. Kessel and Ellis, who came up during the Charlie Christian era, often appear with a bassist and drummer, but they sound best when they're left alone to back each other up. Sets begin at nine-thirty, eleven-thirty, and one-fifteen, Tuesdays through Saturdays.

Gregory's, 1149 First Ave., at 63rd St. (371-2220)—On Mondays guitarist **ATTILA ZOLLER** collaborates with pianist **DON FRIEDMAN** and bassist **HARVIE SWARTZ**; on Tuesdays, guitarist **CHUCK WAYNE** leads a trio; and Wednesdays through Sundays, guitarist **JOE PUMA** holds down the fort with **HOD O'BRIEN** on piano and vocalist Alicia Sherman. All these groups play from ten, except on Sunday, when the music starts at nine. Nightly, except Sundays, from seven to ten, pianist Loumell Morgan and bassist Morris Edwards team up on the tiny bandstand.

Hors d'Oeuvrerie, at Windows on the World, 107th Floor, 1 World Trade Center. (938-1111)—On a clear day, you can see Jersey City. Pianist **DILL JONES** leads a trio Tuesdays through Saturdays from seven-thirty to twelve-thirty. Pianist Emme Kemp alternates with the Jones trio after nine-thirty.

Hurrah, 36 W. 62nd St. (541-4909)—A big second-floor loft space with live and taped new-wave and old-wave rock, and dancing to both. The live bands: the Flashcubes, the Marshalls, and the Zantees, on Wednesday, June 6, which is designated Bomp Night; on Thursday, June 7, Quincy and Leisure Units; on Friday, June 8, Elliott Murphy; on Saturday, June 9, Romantics and Neighborhoods; on Monday, June 11, Battered Wives and Neon Leon; and on Tuesday, June 12, Bat-

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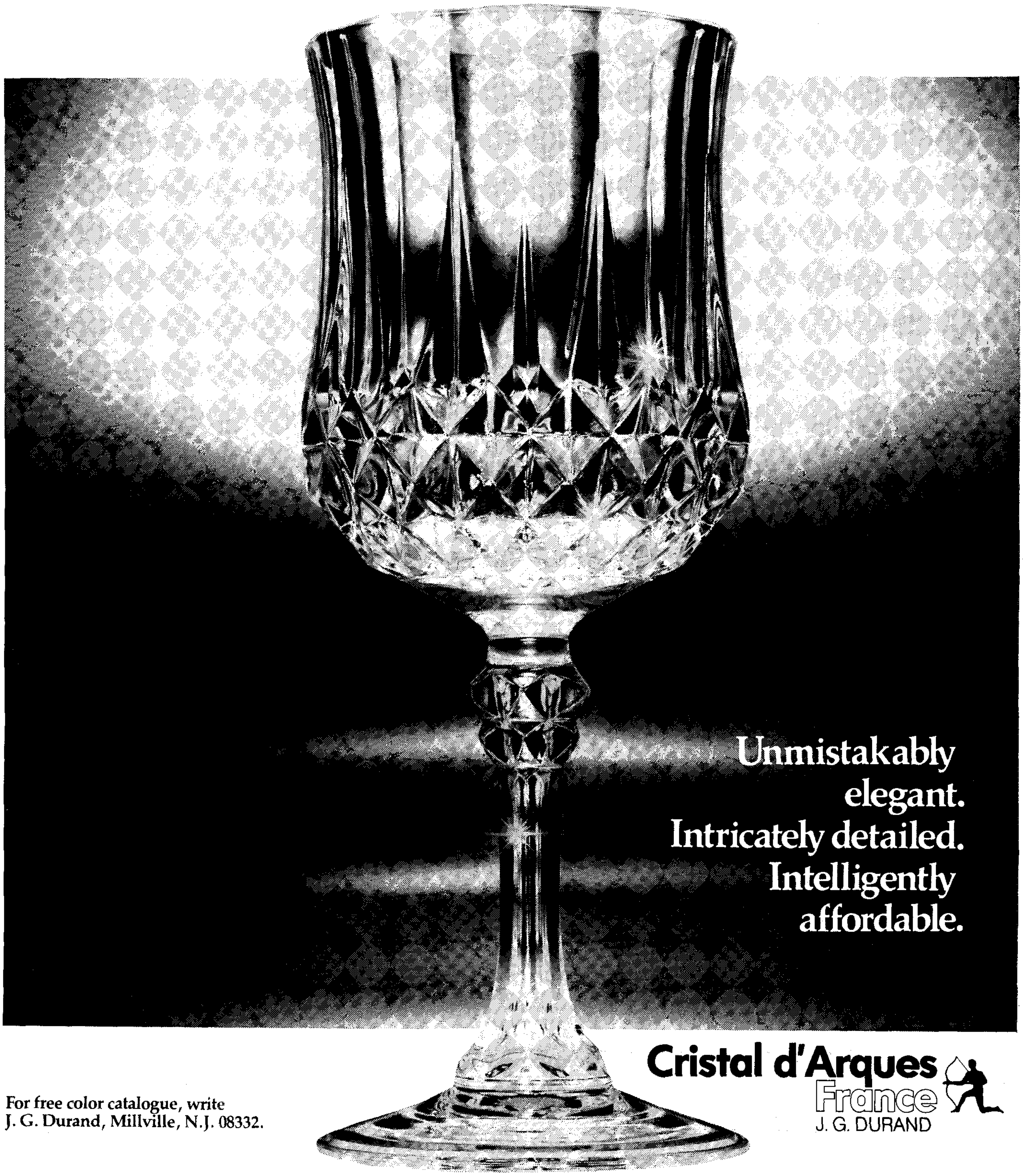

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

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tered Wives and Man Beaters. Live music nightly after eleven; taped music from nine. Dancing.

Jazzmania Society, 14 E. 23rd St., on the fourth floor. (477-3077)—A carpeted jazz loft with a living-room atmosphere: a working fireplace, couches, chairs, and pillow furniture are some of the amenities. One just stretches out while the musicians perform on the bandstand. June may be dairy month, but it's Brazilian month around here: on Friday and Saturday, June 8-9, Tiago deMello, a singer and composer from the Amazon, will perform, and on Friday and Saturday, June 15-16, **DENISE DELAPENHA** will sing jazz sambas in a convincing style with her quartet. Music Wednesdays through Saturdays from nine; Sundays, from eight-thirty. Soft drinks and snacks.

Jimmy Ryan's, 154 W. 54th St. (664-9700)—**ROY ELDRIDGE,** the house legend, is propelled by a willing Dixieland-style quintet. On Mondays, Max Kaminsky leads the group. Music weeknights from nine-thirty to three. On Sundays, Kaminsky directs another group of musical archivists from eight until two.

Knickerbocker Saloon, 33 University Pl., at 9th St. (228-8490)—A pleasant corner piano-bass depot. Pianist and occasional vocalist **JIMMY ROWLES** and bassist **BOB CRANSHAW** have settled into the music nook. Tuesdays through Saturdays from ten. Dining. No music on Sundays or Mondays.

Lone Star Café, 61 Fifth Ave., at 13th St. (242-1664)—Texas is a place where women are women and men wear Bermuda shorts all summer; the Lone Star is an authentic (despite its Yankee locale) Texas hangout. The music is good, solid, blues, rock, or country, and runs from about nine-fifteen until two. The performers include bluesmen **MIGHTY JOE YOUNG, JOHNNY SHINES,** and **ROBERT (JUNIOR) LOCKWOOD** on Wednesday, June 6; bassist Rob Stoner and his rock-and-roll band on Thursday, June 7; singer and bluegrass banjo picker Doug Dillard (of the Dillards) on Sunday and Monday, June 10-11; Texas Jewish cowboy Kinky Friedman on Tuesday, June 12; and country-pop singer Bobby Bare on Wednesday and Thursday, June 13-14. Dining.

Marty's, 1265 Third Ave., at 73rd St. (249-4100)—A dark, clubby-looking room, with heavy furniture, chandeliers, and a picture-window view of a garden. **ANITA O'DAY** will be singing here with her backing combo for a couple of weeks. Mondays through Thursdays at nine and eleven; Fridays at nine-thirty and eleven-thirty; and Saturdays at eleven-thirty and one. Dining.

Max's Kansas City, 213 Park Ave. S., at 17th St. (777-7870)—Crowded in the sixties, crowded in the seventies, and it will probably be crowded in the eighties. Part of the lineup: Wednesday, June 6, Theoretical Girls and Antenna; Thursday, June 7, Voodoo Shoes and the Dead Kennedys; Friday, June 8, the Invaders and Heat; Saturday, June 9, Regina Richards and Red Hot; Sunday, June 10, Stiletto's Fad, the Mad, and the Raven; Monday, June 11, Firebirds, the Knots, and the Maroons; and Tuesday, June 12, Su-Sin Shocks, the Saucers, and Paper Men. New-wave rock nightly after ten-thirty.

Michael's Pub, 211 E. 55th St. (758-2272)—**JOYA SHERRILL,** who was a teen-age Duke Ellington vocalist (some thirty-five years ago), sings Harold Arlen songs through Saturday, June 9, in her direct, bright manner. Pianist **JUNIOR MANCE** and his trio help her out. On Tuesday, June 12, George Melly, an English television and movie critic, will arrive with trumpeter John Chilton's Feetwarmers to sing traditional jazz and music-hall numbers. Tuesdays through Saturdays. Music from nine-fifteen. On Mondays, from nine-thirty to midnight, Woody Allen comes and goes. Dining. Closed Sundays.

Mikell's, 760 Columbus Ave., at 97th St. (864-8832)—A little neighborhood place that brings in jazz, blues, funk, and disco musicians. Tuesday and Wednesday, June 12-13, have been reserved for ethereal vibraharpist **MIKE MAINIERI** and pianist **WARREN BERNHARDT.** Other groups round out the week. Music from ten until two. Dining.

One Fifth Avenue, Fifth Ave. at 8th St. (260-3434)—A trendy downtown haunt with good music in the cocktail lounge-clam bar. **AL HAIG,** one of the earliest and still one of the best bop pianists, works with a bassist every night except Monday and Friday. Mondays and Fridays are claimed by the Downtown Blue Blowers, a traditional-jazz sextet that features drummer **FREDDIE MOORE,** who worked with King Oliver a season or two ago and who is about to pounce on his eightieth year. Dining.

Other End, 149 Bleecker St. (673-7030)—It's mostly just folkies right now: singer Jim Dawson will perform Thursday through Saturday, June 7-9; the Aztec Two-Step will be here Friday and Saturday, June 15-16. Shows most nights at nine and eleven-thirty, on Fridays and Saturdays at nine and midnight.

Rainbow Room, 30 Rockefeller Plaza. (757-9090)—Lots of tourists, a few sagacious natives, and a dance band populate this room. **SY OLIVER** directs a septet Tuesdays through Thursdays from seven to one, Fridays and Saturdays from eight to two, and Sundays from six to midnight. Dining.

Reno Sweeney, 126 W. 13th St. (691-0900)—The comedy team of **MONTEITH AND RAND** is here through Saturday, June 9. Shows at nine and eleven. Tuesday through Sunday, June 12-17, singer Annie Ross (the Ross of Lambert, Hendricks & Ross) will do the show at nine; and Wednesday through Saturday, June 13-16, Nico, the ex-singer for the ex-group Velvet Underground, will do the eleven-thirty. Dining. Mondays are showcase nights.

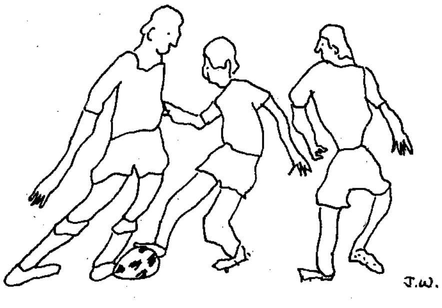
Seventh Avenue South, 21 Seventh Ave. S., at Leroy St. (242-4694)—A light, airy second-floor jazz club, in which most of the walls are refreshingly uncluttered. Trumpeter and co-proprietor **RANDY BRECKER** will head a quintet Thursday through Sunday, June 7-10; guitarist Barry Finnerty will take the Tuesday and Wednesday, June 12-13, slot; and on Thursday, June 14, flugelhorn specialist **ART FARMER** will arrive with a quartet. Various other groups appear the rest of the time. Music from ten to two nightly. Dining.

Sheraton Centre, Seventh Ave. at 52nd St. (581-1000)—In a lounge called the French Quarter, one will find **BUCKY PIZZARELLI,** a subtle, rhythmically inspired guitarist who plays fervent jazz that is disguised as hotel music. He works with pianist **TONY MONTE** and bassist **RON NASPO** at nine and eleven nightly, except Sundays.

Sweet Basil, 88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (242-1785)—Alto saxophonist Lou Donaldson leads his quartet through Saturday, June 9; bebop pianist **JOE ALBANY** will move in for Sunday and Monday, June 10-11; and on Tuesday, June 12, super bassist **RON CARTER** will come in with his super quartet—pianist **KENNY BARRON,** bassist **BUSTER WILLIAMS,** and drummer **BEN RILEY.** Music from about ten. Dining.

Tin Palace, 325 Bowery, at 2nd St. (674-9115)—A relaxed, informal musicians' and listeners' hangout with a fine out-there and in-there lineup. Drummer **JOE CHAMBERS** will guide a quintet Friday through Sunday, June 8-10; and Thursday through Sunday, June 14-17, percussionist **RAY MANTILLA** will be present with his quintet, which usually features flutist **JEREMY STEIG.** Music every night after ten. Dining.

Tramps, 125 E. 15th St., at Irving Pl. (777-5077)—**STORMIN' NORMAN AND SUZY**—Norman Zamcheck and Suzy Williams—perform slapstick rock, blues, and ragtime music Fridays and Saturdays, at ten and midnight. Dining.



Trax, 100 W. 72nd St., near Columbus Ave. (799-1448)—This place is primarily a showcase for unestablished rock bands, but sometimes established performers make their way onto the stage, too. The understated entrance is easy to miss. Music every night but Sunday, usually at midnight and two. Dining.

Village Gate, 160 Bleecker St. (475-5120)—Downstairs, pianist **MC COY TYNER,** intense and vertiginous, performs with his septet on Fridays and Saturdays at nine-thirty and eleven-thirty. In the Top of the Gate, guitarist **JOE PASS** will be seen Friday through Sunday, June 15-17, at ten and midnight. Jazz harpist **DAPHNE HELLMAN** and her trio work in the sidewalk lounge on Tuesdays from nine.

Village Vanguard, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—**SONNY FORTUNE,** the driving, hard-edged alto saxophonist who plays long solos that are interesting and compelling, leads his quintet through Sunday, June 10; on Tuesday, June 12, vibraharpist **MILT JACKSON,** the Samuel F. B. Morse of the blues, will bring in his quartet. Mondays are **MEL LEWIS** big-band nights. Music from ten.

West Boondock, 114 Tenth Ave., at 17th St. (929-9645)—Most of the patrons of this comfortable bar and soul-food restaurant make a special point of coming—they don't just stroll by and decide to drop in. After all, this isn't a Village club, which thrives on a casual passerby clientele; this is a dark, gloomy, out-of-the-way (unless one is a trucker or in the slaughterhouse business) corner. Mondays through Wednesdays, Sonelius Smith is at the piano; Thursdays through Sundays are turned over to Sadik Hakim. Music from eight to two.

West End, 2911 Broadway, at 113th St. (666-8750)—Columbia's off-campus survey of swing music. **THE COUNTSMEN**—ex-Basie-ites **DICKY WELLS** and **EARLE WARREN** and their quintet—are one of the best swing bands around, and they are here every night but Monday, June 11, for the next week and a half. Things get under way about nine. Student food at student prices.

JAZZ/FOLK/ROCK CONCERTS, PERSONAL APPEARANCES, ETC.

Martha Schlamme—In "A Woman Without a Man Is . . . ," an evening of song and poetry. (Theatre East, 211 E. 60th St. 355-7025. Tuesdays through Thursdays at 8, and Fridays and Saturdays at 7:30 and 10. Matinées Sundays at 3. Closes Sunday, June 17.)

Rod Stewart—Madison Square Garden, Eighth Ave. between 31st and 33rd Sts. 564-4400. Thursday through Saturday, June 7-9, at 8.

Journey and **Sweet**—Palladium, 126 E. 14th St. Friday, June 8, at 8. For information about tickets, call 977-9020.

Larry Coryell and **the Mike Nock Group**—Public Theatre, 425 Lafayette St. 677-6350. Friday and Saturday, June 8-9, at 11.

Milt Jackson Fortieth-Anniversary Concert—Mr. Jackson, along with his quintet, an eighteen-piece orchestra (led by Ernie Wilkins), and Dizzy Gillespie. (Carnegie Hall. 247-7459. Saturday, June 9, at 8.)

U.F.O. and **AC/DC**—Palladium. Saturday, June 9, at 8.

Roy Haynes Hip Ensemble—Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. Monday, June 11, at 7:30. For information about tickets, call 866-9000.

Yes—Madison Square Garden. Wednesday through Friday, June 13-15, at 8.

Teruo Nakamura—Carnegie Hall. Friday, June 15, at 8.

Julio Iglesias—Madison Square Garden. Saturday, June 16, at 8:30.

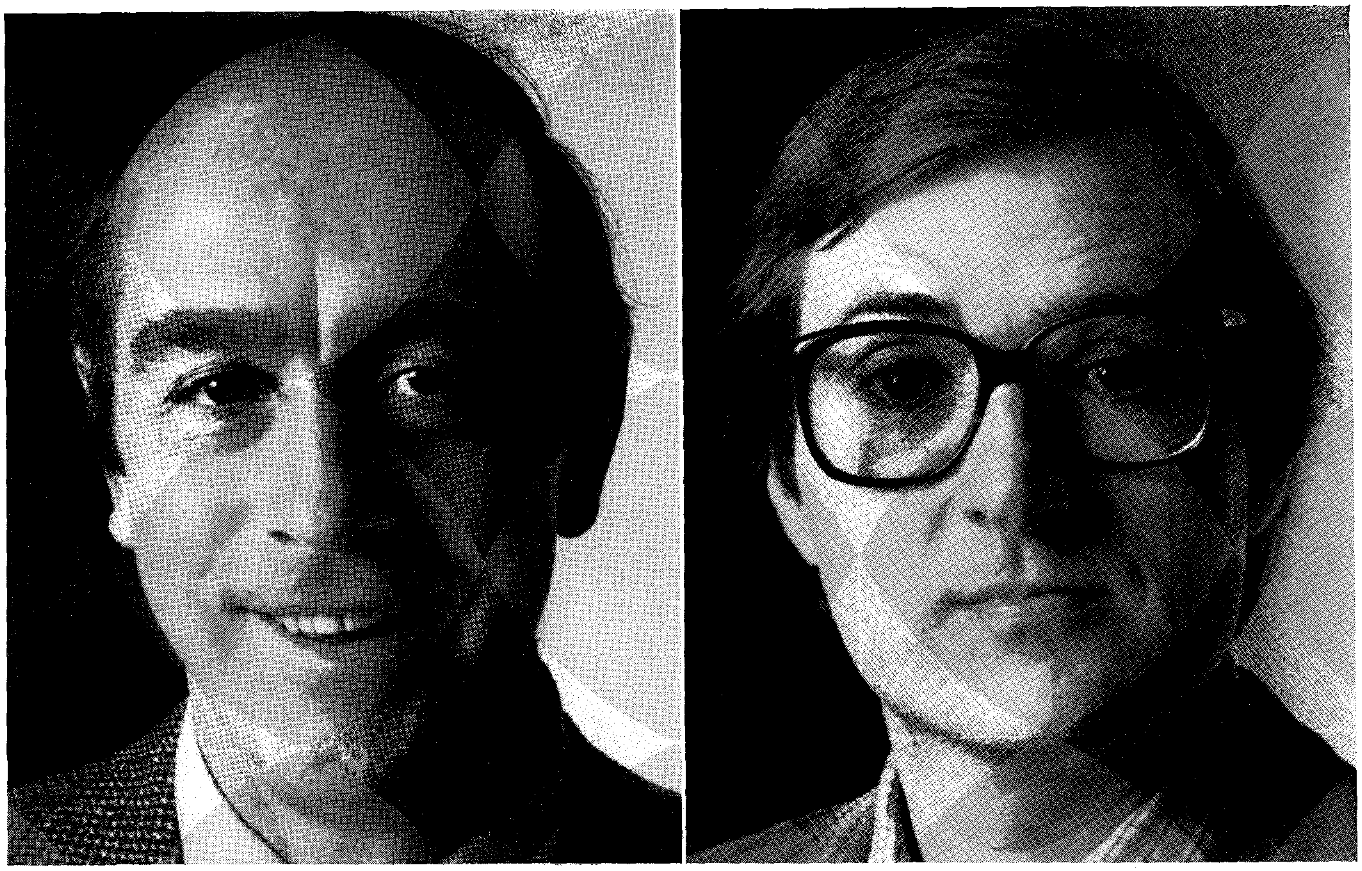
ART

(Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Tuesdays through Saturdays from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6.)

GALLERIES—UPTOWN

Raoul Dufy (1877-1953)—Pencil drawings, with occasional touches of color, reflecting the good life—in Paris, Nice, New York, at the races, in grand salons, fine restaurants. Through Saturday, June 9. (A. M. Adler, 21 E. 67th St.)

Lyonel Feininger (1871-1956)—This artist's



One of these men just bought a car that's specially ordered, newly painted, but belongs to someone else.

He got a "really great deal" from "somebody who knew somebody in the business." What the man on the left didn't know was that "the business" was car theft—a $1.7 billion business—one of the most lucrative and costly crimes in the country today. Lucrative for thieves, costly for the rest of us.

Organized car theft rings have found that stealing automobiles is profitable in several ways. Some people arrange to have their cars stolen to collect on the insurance. Then the car is broken up into valuable parts for re-sale. Other people seek to buy used cars at a lower price than offered on the legitimate market, even though they may know something isn't right with the deal.

As a major group of property and casualty insurance companies, we want to stop this crime. And so should you, because your auto insurance premiums have to go up to pay for these theft claims.

In several states, concerned citizens are working with law enforcement and insurance personnel to check the spread of auto theft. We applaud and support these efforts and urge you to do the same. Working together, we believe we *can* make a difference and keep automobile insurance affordable.

Here's what we're doing:

- Supporting the National Automobile Theft Bureau, a non-profit organization created by insurance companies to help law enforcement agencies combat auto theft.
- Investigating theft claims more thoroughly.
- Encouraging manufacturers to install improved locking devices.
- Utilizing a system that checks for incorrect or forged vehicle identification numbers.
- Encouraging improvement of state automobile certificate of title laws.
- Informing people what they can do to prevent auto theft.

Here's what you can do:

- Check the title before you buy a used car.
- Support anti-car theft campaigns sponsored by the National Automobile Theft Bureau and by other organizations.
- Take your key and lock your doors. Don't invite trouble.
- Install an anti-theft alarm. You may receive a premium discount.
- Avoid the temptation to make that "really great deal"—you may lose the vehicle and your money.

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

distinctive, incisive line is seen at its best in the thirty drawings and watercolors in this exhibit, and especially in his portrayal of yachts gliding along in the distance under a towering Cubist arrangement of sail. Through July 28. (Sabarsky, 987 Madison Ave., at 77th St. Opens at noon.)

Gregory Gillespie—Recent paintings by this realist craftsman include a large still-life incorporating portraits of the artist and his wife. Through Friday, June 8. (Forum, 1018 Madison Ave., at 79th St.)

Jeffrey Kronsnoble / John Stewart—Trompe-l'oeil works (dry brush on paper). / Abstract paintings on Plexiglas. Through Saturday, June 16. (ACA, 21 E. 67th St.)

Hayley Lever (1876-1958)—Impressionist paintings and pastels. Through June 22. (FAR Gallery, 22 E. 80th St. Open Mondays; closed Saturdays.)

Harry McCormick—Realist paintings of local bar interiors, notably Luchow's, the Russian Tea Room, the Empire Diner on Tenth Avenue, with its Art Deco trappings. Through Saturday, June 16. (Brewster, 1018 Madison Ave., at 79th St.)

Robert Motherwell—This artist usually works big, and these fifty-four small paintings, accumulated over the past twenty years, represent practically all that exists in this size. Every one bears the unmistakable stamp of the artist. Through Saturday, June 16. (Ehrlich, 28 E. 74th St.)

Gabor Peterdi—Paintings. Through Friday, June 15. (Borgenicht, 1018 Madison Ave., at 79th St.)

Mark Rendleman—Photo-Realist studies of rock formations exposed in cliffsides or in stream beds. Through Friday, June 15. (Weiner, 21 E. 73rd St. Closes at 4.)

Shalom of Safed—Paintings and lithographs illustrating Old Testament scenes, by a self-taught artist who is also showing works at the Jewish Museum. Through Friday, June 15. (Weintraub, 992 Madison Ave., at 77th St.)

Rufino Tamayo—Works on paper from his entire career: watercolors, gouaches, drawings, and prints. A larger retrospective is currently on view at the Guggenheim Museum. Through Aug. 12. (Center for Inter-American Relations, 680 Park Ave., at 68th St. Daily, except Mondays, noon to 6.)

William Tucker—Two exhibits of large-scale steel sculptures and the drawings for them: a single work at the Elkon, 1063 Madison Ave., at 80th St. (through Friday, June 8), and five pieces in SoHo, at 98 Prince St. (through Saturday, June 9).

Group Shows—At the **LEFEBRE**, 47 E. 77th St.: Outsize paintings, in acrylics on rice paper, of Chinese girls in gaily colored costumes, by Walasse Ting, dominate this group show of gallery regulars, among them Alechinsky, Antes, and Segui. Through June 29. (Closed Saturdays.). . . **LUBIN HOUSE**, 11 E. 61st St.: Fifteen works in clay (by such artists as Helen Frankenthaler, Anthony Caro, and Kenneth Noland) produced at Syracuse University's Clay Institute. Through June 26. (Open Mondays; closed Saturdays.). . . **PERLS**, 1016 Madison Ave., at 78th St.: Prize paintings from the twenties are on view, including works by Picasso, Léger, Rouault, and Soutine, plus a recently acquired small Calder mobile. Through Saturday, June 16. . . . **SAIDENBERG**, 1018 Madison Ave., at 79th St.: Tiny lyrical abstractions based on nature and done in watercolor by Victor Elmaleh; mildly surrealist works by André Masson ("Métamorphose de Hamlet," for instance); small abstracts by Erik Koch; and sombre paintings done in oil mixed with sand by György Kepes. Through June 23. (Opens at 1 on Saturdays.) . . . **SHEPHERD**, 21 E. 84th St.: English paintings and drawings, 1830-1930. Through Saturday, June 16. . . . **WILLARD**, 29 E. 72nd St.: Two of the artists represented in the current group show are Michael Tetherow, who cuts haunting eye sockets in his large paintings covered with black and dark-blue pigment, and Robert Lobe, who reproduces boulders by wrapping them with sheet aluminum and pounding them with a mallet until every wrinkle is brought out. Through June 21. (Closed Saturdays.)

GALLERIES—57TH STREET AREA

Robert Arneson—This California portraitist has divided his more-than-life-size ceramic busts into two categories: heroes and clowns. In the first category he includes Elvis Presley, "Vince" van Gogh, and "Mother" Dürer. In the second, the artist includes only himself. Through Friday, June 8. (Frumkin, 50 W. 57th St.)

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Leonid Berman (1896-1975)—This romantic artist travelled the world, keeping to the water's edge, sketching the ports, studying fishing methods, and observing rice planters. Through Friday, June 15. (Miller, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. Open Mondays; closed Saturdays.)

Frank Bowling—Recent abstract paintings. Through June 21. (De Nagy, 29 W. 57th St.)

Ann Chernow—Two women seated at a soda-fountain counter—eleven times over. Also other drawings and prints. Through Saturday, June 16. (Aaron Berman, 50 W. 57th St.)

Sam Francis / Helen Frankenthaler—Large-scale oils based on a heavy-duty grid riddled with splotches of cheerful colors (these works were first shown at the Beaubourg in Paris), plus smaller paintings and works on paper. / Relatively small acrylic works on paper—exercises in chromatic harmony, really. Through Friday, June 15. (Emmerich, 41 E. 57th St. Open Mondays; closed Saturdays.)

Mary Frank—A new group of her characteristic fragmented reclining-figure sculptures, plus a new series of works in porcelain, which look like glorified fossils, and some new drawings on ceramic tablets. Through Friday, June 15. (Zabriskie, 29 W. 57th St. Open Mondays; closed Saturdays.)

Sonia Gechtoff—This artist paints a window-like frame on paper and fills it in with subdivisions of solid color (acrylic), which she then works over with a 9-H pencil, the hardest made. The result is a mysterious, pulsating surface. Through Saturday, June 9. (Gruenebaum, 38 E. 57th St.)

Michael Graves—Architectural artwork, ranging from formal oil paintings to doodles, and including a rendering of a combination bridge and cultural center. Through Saturday, June 16. (Protetch, 37 W. 57th St.)

Sylvia Guirey—Rectangular fields of color painted, a drop at a time, on untreated, unstretched canvas, giving a rich, grainy overall effect. First solo show in New York. Through Saturday, June 16. (Parsons, 24 W. 57th St.)

Charles Harrison—Knitted pictures, done in a realist manner reminiscent of Chuck Close. The subject matter includes a couple of portraits, skiing scenes, and the shadow of a great horned owl diving over a slope of wild flowers. Through Saturday, June 16. (Fitch-Febvrel, 5 E. 57th St.)

Barbara Hepworth (1903-75)—Thirty-five pieces of sculpture done by this English artist during the last fifteen years of her life—bronzes and carvings in marble and wood. Through June 29. (Marlborough, 40 W. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

Irving Kriesberg and George McNeil—Paintings. Through June 22. (Dintenfass, 50 W. 57th St. Open Mondays; closed Saturdays.)

Ethel Magafan—Preparatory works for a Civil War mural that the artist has designed for the National Military Park, in Fredericksburg, Virginia. Through Friday, June 8. (Midtown, 11 E. 57th St.)

Nellie Mae Rowe—Lively primitive drawings done with felt-tipped pens and colored pencils by a seventy-eight-year-old Georgia woman whose schooling ended at the fifth grade (so she could pick cotton with the rest of the family) and who has been drawing all her life. First solo show in New York. Through Saturday, June 9. (Parsons-Dreyfuss, 24 W. 57th St.)

René Schumacher—These paintings, called maps of distant worlds, consist of bright-colored jigsaw-like pieces laid out on a dark ground. Through June 23. (Iolas, 52 E. 57th St.)

Tony Smith—There are two works in this show, one consisting of ten freestanding geometric forms, about five feet high and painted black. It is titled "Ten Elements." The other, called "Throwback," which looks as if it might have been made up of the elements all hitched together (but wasn't), is the sort of thing he was doing some time ago. Through Saturday, June 9. (Pace, 32 E. 57th St.)

Syd Solomon—Abstract paintings, high-pitched in color and explosive in design that reflect the artist's residence on the west coast of Florida. Through Saturday, June 9. (Genesis, 41 E. 57th St.)

Peter Vogel / William P. Gottlieb—Delicate wire constructions strung with electronic components that sound off musically when a viewer draws near enough to cast a shadow on them. Some are wall pieces and others are mounted on pedestals. / Photographs of most of the leading figures in the golden age of jazz—Armstrong, Ellington, Calloway, Billie Holiday, Dizzy Gillespie, and so on. Through June 30. (Arras, 29 W. 57th St.)

Robert Wilbert—Oil paintings, including a couple of portraits, some floral still-lifes, and arrangements of the sort of things one finds in an attic—Indian clubs, tin horns, toy automobiles, billiard racks, an adding machine, a shako. First one-man show in New York. Through June 23. (Droll-Kolbert, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.)

Works on Paper—Fernand Léger and Jean Arp are represented by colorful drawings and collages (Arp has a marble carving, too), and Henri Laurens by some unusual Cubist drawings and later life-studies. Through June 23. (Heidenberg, 50 W. 57th St.)

Group Shows—At the **GLADSTONE-VILLANI**, 38 E. 57th St.: Watercolor still-lifes by Sondra Freckelton, Jon Carsman, and ten other artists. Through June 22. (Open Mondays; closed Saturdays.). . . **ODYSSIA**, 730 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.: Fourteen artists (Jack Beal, Ellen Lanyon, Lucas Samaras among them) showing pastels. Through Friday, June 15. (Open Mondays; closed Saturdays.). . . **PEARL**, 29 W. 57th St.: A show of gallery regulars includes handmade paper works by Winifred Lutz and Clinton Hill, and small, medallion-like collages (and photographs of collages) assembled together into one piece by Barbara Siegel. Through Saturday, June 9. . . . **ALEX ROSENBERG**, 20 W. 57th St.: Works by nine artists relatively unfamiliar in this city: canvases by Faiya Fredman on which the edge of a tide has left its mark, reinforced by the artist with a bit of sand and graphite; allover patterns made up of sewn letters and numbers by Russell Forester; posterlike portraits of women in nineteenth-century dress by Barbara Sandler; and others. Through June 23. (Open Mondays.)

GALLERIES—SoHo

Walter De Maria—Sculptures. Through June 30. (Lone Star, 393 West Broadway. Opens daily, except Mondays, at noon.)

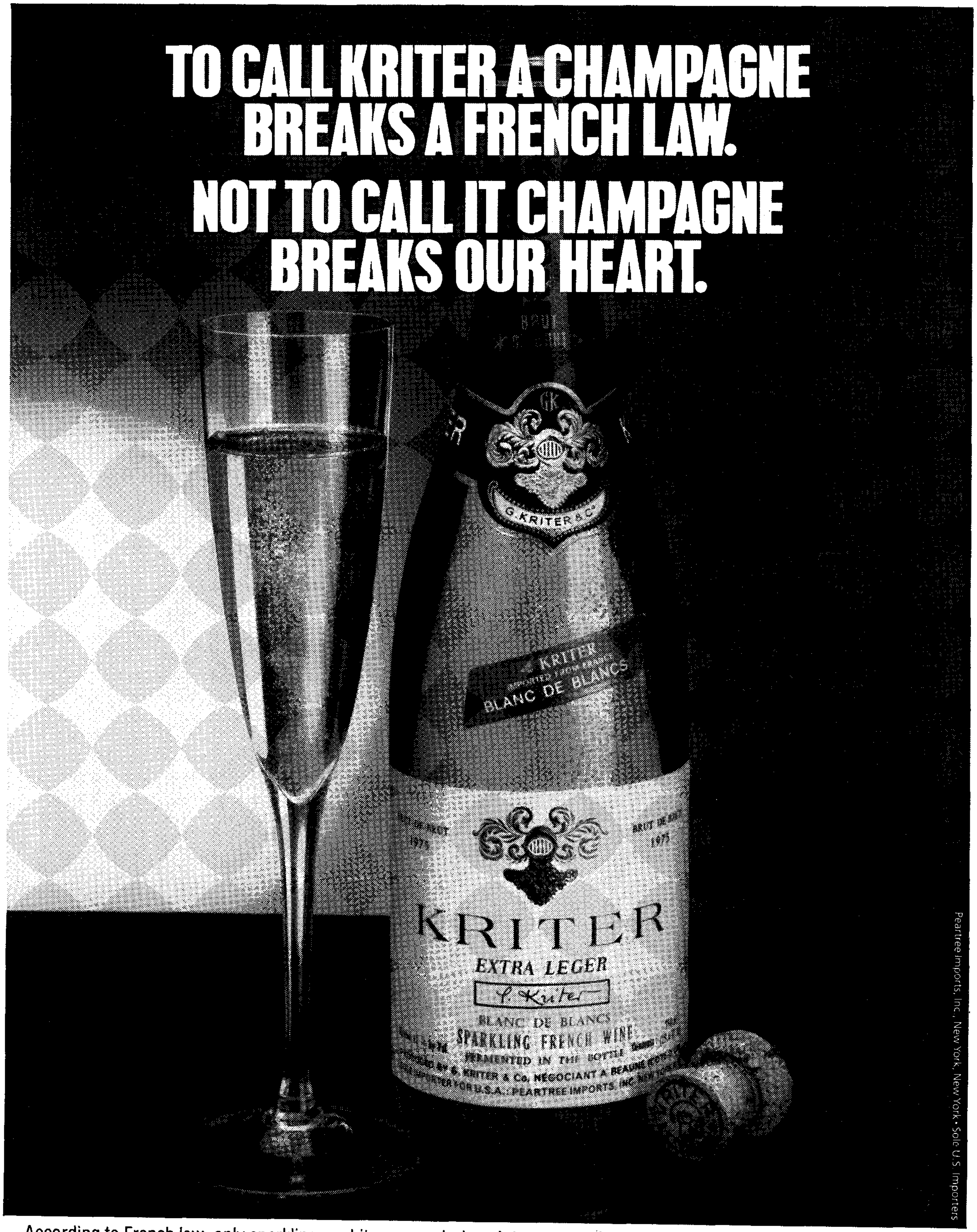
Arie Galles / Raymon Elozua—Handsome wall pieces in which vertical white aluminum slats are decorated with bright, colored designs of the kind that change as you walk past them. The paint is fluorescent and casts a feeble eerie glow beside it, like an anti-shadow. / Highly realistic ceramic models of huge trestlework structures that time has passed by—mine heads, coaling stations, railroad cranes—all falling to pieces in miniature. Through Saturday, June 16. (O.K. Harris, 383 West Broadway.)

Eunice Golden—Portraits of family and friends. Through Wednesday, June 13. (SoHo 20, 99 Spring St. Opens at noon.)

Peter Hutchinson—In these color photographs, the months of the year are spelled out letter by letter, written on the snow or on the sides of flourishing trees, for instance, or picked out of commercial signs. Through Saturday, June 16. (Gibson, 392 West Broadway.)

Joseph Kosuth—Conceptual art, to wit: Two billboards, side by side on a wall at the southeast corner of Broadway and Houston Street, share a message that concludes as follows: "To read this text/sign is to erase that erasure which this must become in order to say more than is said here." Through Friday, June 15. . . . ¶ Identical signs are hung on the walls of the Castelli Gallery, 420 West Broadway, along with photographs of signs with comparable messages posted abroad, in French, Dutch, and German. Through Saturday, June 16.

Keith Sonnier—Simple, antic abstract designs done with neon and argon tubing in simple, antic colors. Unfortunately, the wiring in this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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

installation is left out in the open, detracting considerably from the general effect. Through Saturday, June 16. (Castelli, 420 West Broadway.)

Fumio Yoshimura—A sculptor who delights in difficult tasks. This time his lindenwood carvings re-create a Sabrett hot dog stand in toto, an artichoke, and bike wheels. Through July 7. (Hoffman, 429 West Broadway.)

Kes Zapkus—Wall-size paintings made up of individual postage-stamp-size abstractions crammed together across the canvas, forming a surface that fairly teems with color. Through Saturday, June 9. (Cooper, 155 Wooster St.)

Group Shows—At THE DRAWING CENTER, 137 Greene St.: A refreshing new group of seventy-six works chosen from hundreds screened by this facility. Among the prizes are a small, ornate cardboard temple by Andrew Glass, in which details of famous paintings are seen through various apertures; a set of amusing monotypes entitled "Twenty Questions" by Karen Loftus; and two huge urban-landscape drawings in chalk and charcoal by Graham Nickson. Through July 21. (Open Mondays; open Wednesday evenings until 8.) . . . LANDMARK, 469 Broome St.: Seventeen artists are participating in an all-drawing show. Through Saturday, June 9. (Opens at 11:30.) . . . SPERONE WESTWATER FISCHER, 142 Greene St.: A changing exhibition of works by Carl Andre, Richard Long, Mario Merz, and others. Through July 27. . . . THORP, 419 West Broadway: Paintings and sculptures by John Lees, Dennis Masback, Jane Rosen, and others. Through July 27. (Mondays through Fridays, noon to 6.)

Sculpture—A group show includes a small, quirky neon wall piece by Stephen Antonakos; an eight-foot-tall tower of open cubes by Sol LeWitt; and a massive block of solid oak hewn from a fallen tree and preserved from cracking in a mahogany crate by David Nash. Through June 30. (Meyer, 410 West Broadway.)

OTHER GALLERIES

Doris Cross—Columns of printed matter in which this artist has picked out "found" poetry word by word, smudging everything else, and drawing decorations in the margins. Through Saturday, June 9. (Sragow, 43 Fifth Ave., at 11th St. Wednesdays through Saturdays, 1 to 6.)

John Ferren (1905-70)—Abstract Expressionist paintings. Through June 22. (City University Graduate Center, ground-floor arcade, 33 W. 42nd St. Open Mondays; closed Saturdays.)

Joan Thorne / Steve Seaberg—Large, colorful abstract paintings in which ribbons of a single color weave their way around a canvas crowded with similar ribbons. / Rough, raw tableaux made up of found objects. Through Saturday, June 9. (The Clocktower, 108 Leonard St., four blocks south of Canal St., at Broadway. Wednesdays through Saturdays, 1 to 6.)

Lynn Umlauf / Bernar Venet—Shaped canvases, most of them in the form of a fan and pieced together from sections of pastel-tinted paper. / Arcs, some drawn on paper with graphite and others constructed of wood. The magnitude of each arc is carefully noted in degrees and minutes. Through Saturday, June 9. (Bromm, 90 West Broadway, at Chambers St. Opens at 1.)

Sustained Visions—Works by three individualistic artists: Gaylen Hansen, who paints characters from his own mythology; Claire Moore, who writes on her canvases as much as she draws on them; and Salvatore Scarpitta, who makes things out of wood (full-scale racing cars, sleds, and abstract collages). Through June 23. (The New Museum, 65 Fifth Ave., at 14th St. Opens weekdays at noon; open Wednesday evenings until 8.)

Group Shows—At the CLAYWORKS STUDIO WORKSHOP, 4 Great Jones St., between Broadway and Lafayette St.: Benny Andrews, Buffy Johnson, Sherman Drexler, and Patsy Norvell are among the seventy artists who have a work apiece in a show of paintings, drawings, prints, and ceramics. Through Friday, June 15. (Tuesdays through Sundays, 1 to 4.) . . . HENRY STREET SETTLEMENT, 466 Grand St.: Nancy Graves, Sol LeWitt, Howardena Pindell, and Joan Snyder are exhibiting their works alongside those of other artists, selected by them; the selectees, in their turn, each chose another artist. In all, there are works by twelve artists. Through Friday, June 8. (Mondays through Fridays, 11 to 7; Saturdays, 11 to 4.)

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PHOTOGRAPHY

Alvin Langdon Coburn (1882-1966)—Nearly a hundred photographs. Half of them were made during his association with the Photo-Secessionists, and the other half in the nineteen-fifties (the latter are semi-abstractions). Through Saturday, June 9. (Prakapas, 19 E. 71st St.)

Mark Feldstein—Black-and-white triptychs that narrate, but only subtly, a bizarre narrative. Through Saturday, June 16. (Castelli Uptown, 4 E. 77th St.)

Robert and Frances Flaherty—Photogravures of the native actors in Flaherty's "Nanook of the North," of 1922, and original photographs of the people in the Aran Islands by Mrs. Flaherty. Through June 23. (Wolf, 30 W. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

Scott Hyde / Betty Hahn—Impressionistic color prints. / Photographs of flowers that have been altered by applications of paint, pastels, and chalk. Through Saturday, June 16. (Witkin, 41 E. 57th St.)

Gertrude Käsebier (1852-1934)—A hundred prints, most of them platinum portraits, by the renowned Pictorialist are on exhibition at the Brooklyn Museum. See below, under "Museums," for dates and times.

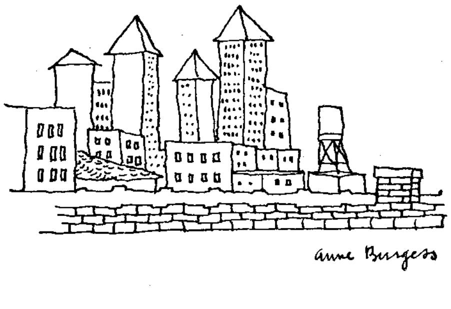
Eva Rubinstein / J. Seeley—Portraits, interiors, and landscapes. / Abstractions. Through June 23. (Neikrug, 224 E. 68th St. Wednesdays through Saturdays, 1 to 6.)

Max Yavno—Photographs, most of them made in New York and California in the forties. Through Friday, June 15. (Pfeifer, 825 Madison Ave., at 69th St. Closed Saturdays.)

Group Shows—At the GREY ART GALLERY, New York University, Washington Pl., just east of Washington Sq.: Two hundred photographs made in the thirties and forties and culled from the archives of *Life*. With examples by Bourke-White, Halsman, Munkacsi, and sixty-seven others. Through Aug. 3. (Mondays through Fridays, 11 to 7.) . . . MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, 11 W. 53rd St.: Nineteenth-century photographs by Hill and Adamson, Talbot, Hippolyte Bayard, and others. Through July 29. (Open daily, except Wednesdays, and Thursday evenings until 9.)

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St.—"Treasures from the Kremlin," an exhibit of about a hundred objects made by Russian craftsmen from the twelfth century to the twentieth. Among the works are icons, arms and armor, and coronation regalia; one highlight is Fabergé's fourteen-inch-high stylized representation of the Kremlin, in gold, silver, and enamel. Through Sept. 2. . . . ¶ A show of Ellsworth Kelly's recent works, including eight monochromatic paintings on shaped canvases, a series of black-and-white paintings, and wall and floor sculptures. Through June 24. . . . ¶ Drawings: sixty-four sixteenth-century Italian drawings from the Lehman Collection (through June 17); and fifty seventeenth-century Italian drawings from the museum's collection (through July 8.) . . . ¶ Rembrandt etchings and drawings illustrating scenes from the Bible. Through Sunday, June 10. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 10 to 8:45; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 4:45; Sundays, 11 to 4:45.)



Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53rd St.—A show of sculptures from the museum's own collection which date back no further than fifteen years. Either in the galleries or in the garden are examples by Chamberlain, Judd, LeWitt, Caro, Serra, Hesse, Aycock, Shapiro, Dubuffet, Beuys, Christo, and many others. Through Aug. 7. (Open daily, except Wednesdays, 11 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 9.) . . . NOTE: The museum's sculpture garden, 8 W. 54th St., is open free, Fridays through Sundays, 6 to 10. Informal concerts Fridays and Saturdays at 8: jazz, new musical compositions, and so forth.

Guggenheim Museum, 1071 Fifth Ave., at 89th St.—A retrospective of the paintings of Rufino Tamayo. (Also on view are some pre-Columbian and popular Mexican works that served as inspiration to him.) Through Aug. 12. A complementary show is at the Center for Inter-American Relations, 680 Park Ave., at 68th St. . . . ¶ A selection of paintings by artists who worked in France in the first half of this century, among them Matisse, Gris, Villon, and Picabia. Through Aug. 12. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 11 to 8, with no admission charge from 5 to 8; Wednesdays through Sundays, 11 to 5.)

Whitney Museum of American Art, 945 Madison Ave., at 75th St.—A survey of the sculptures of George Segal, ranging from early life-size white-plaster figures to the more recent solid-color pieces. Also early pastels. Through Sept. 9. . . . ¶ A retrospective show of Cy Twombly, containing forty-five abstractionist paintings and forty drawings dated 1954 to 1977. Through Sunday, June 10. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays through Fridays, 1 to 8, with no admission charge Tuesdays after 6; Saturdays and Sundays, noon to 6.)

Whitney Downtown Museum, 55 Water St., two blocks south of Wall St.—"Dada and New York," a show of works that reflect the spirit of Dada, by artists who were not necessarily associated with the movement. The paintings, drawings, photographs, sculptures, and publications (dated 1915 to 1930) are by Stuart Davis, Arthur G. Dove, Beatrice Wood, Man Ray, and others. Through July 6. (Open Mondays through Fridays, 11 to 3.)

Brooklyn Museum, Eastern Parkway—A retrospective of the nineteenth-century artist Elihu Vedder. Through July 8. . . . PHOTOGRAPHY: Works by Gertrude Käsebier. Through July 8. (Open Wednesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, noon to 5.)

American Museum of Natural History, Central Park W. at 79th St.—A show of art and artifacts from Pompeii. Through July 31. For information about tickets and hours, call 999-7777.

American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters, Broadway at 155th St.—An exhibition of works by newly elected members and recipients of this year's awards. Manuscripts and musical scores by, among others, Arlene Croce, Isaac Bashevis Singer, John Hollander, Joseph Brodsky, Kay Boyle, James McConkey, Philip Schultz, Dave Smith, John N. Morris, and Ned Rorem. Also paintings, drawings, sculptures, and photographs by Larry Rivers, Willem de Kooning, Tony Smith, John M. Johansen, and others. Through June 17. (Open daily, except Mondays, 1 to 4.)

American Craft Museum, 44 W. 53rd St.—"New Handmade Furniture," an exhibit of more than forty chairs, tables, and some less conventional objects, made from a variety of woods. Through July 15. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, 11 to 5.)

Asia House, 112 E. 64th St.—A show of seventy-three Indian miniature paintings, dating from 1600 to 1660, whose subjects are birds and flowers, landscapes, historical events, and figures. Through Sunday, June 10. (Open daily. Hours: Weekdays, 10 to 5, and Thursday evenings until 8:30; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

Jewish Museum, Fifth Ave. at 92nd St.—A show of paintings and sculptures—with motifs based on Jewish mysticism—by David Aronson. Further works, these taken from New Testament subjects, are at the National Academy of Design (see listing below). Through Sept. 4. . . . ¶ Paintings and a stained-glass triptych by Shalom of Safed. A complementary show is at the Weintraub

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

Gallery, 992 Madison Ave., at 77th St. (Open daily except Fridays and Saturdays. Hours: Mondays through Thursdays, noon to 5; Sundays, 11 to 6.)

Morgan Library, 29 E. 36th St.—"Michelangelo and His World," a show of forty-one drawings by the artist on loan from the British Museum. Also, Renaissance drawings and documents, among them letters by Michelangelo and drawings by Raphael, Andrea del Sarto, and Parmigianino. Through July 28. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10:30 to 5, and Thursday evenings until 8:30; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

Museum of American Folk Art, 49 W. 53rd St.—A show of paintings and frakturs that date from 1773 to 1894. Through June 24. (Open daily, except Mondays, 10:30 to 5:30, and Thursday evenings until 8.)

National Academy of Design, 1083 Fifth Ave., at 89th St.—A show of eighty eighteenth-century French drawings on loan from the Musée Carnavalet. Through June 27. . . . ¶ Nineteen paintings by David Aronson. Through Sept. 4. (Open daily, except Mondays, 1 to 5.)

Studio Museum in Harlem, 2033 Fifth Ave., at 125th St.—A show of Hale Woodruff's paintings, ranging from early landscapes of Paris to recent abstract works. . . . ¶ Abstract drawings, paintings, constructions, and prints by, among others, Howardena Pindell, Al Loving, and William T. Williams. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays through Fridays, 10 to 6, and Wednesday evenings until 9; Saturdays and Sundays, 1 to 6.) Both shows through June 24.

EXPERIMENTAL OUTPOSTS

(Various avant-garde enterprises that may involve not only traditional art but video, electronics, dance, and so on.)

Artists Space, 105 Hudson St., at Franklin St. 226-3970. Exhibition hours: Tuesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 6.—Installations by William Leavitt and Ken Wade, through Saturday, June 9.

The Kitchen, 484 Broome St. 925-3615. Exhibition hours: Tuesdays through Saturdays, 1 to 6.—A program of new music by American composers will be given on nine successive evenings, from Friday, June 8, through Saturday, June 16. On opening night, at 6 and 9:30, the composers (and performers) will be Robert Ashley, Philip Glass, Meredith Monk, Pauline Oliveros, and the Steve Reich Ensemble. Thereafter, six different composers will give concerts each evening at 8.

Project Studios One, 46-01 21st St., Long Island City. 784-2084. Exhibition hours: Thursdays through Sundays, 1 to 6.—A group exhibition called the "Altered Photograph," which features works related to photography, and a large number of individual exhibits are on view through Sunday, June 10.

U.S. Custom House, Bowling Green at the foot of Broadway. Exhibition hours: Wednesdays through Sundays, 11 to 6.—Joining the Reginald Marsh murals and the Daniel Chester French statues are sixteen new works (generally conceptual in nature) also created expressly for this building space. Plus dance, music, and other business—performance art—Wednesdays through Fridays at 12:30 and Sundays at 3. Through June 17.

MUSIC

(The box-office number for Avery Fisher Hall is 874-2424, for Carnegie Hall 247-7459, and for Alice Tully Hall 362-1911. Other box-office numbers are included in the listings.)

ORCHESTRAS AND CHORUSES

New York Philharmonic—Leonard Bernstein conducting two special concerts. (Avery Fisher Hall. Wednesday, June 6, and Saturday, June 9, at 8.)

Metropolitan Singers/The Greek Choral Society and the American Symphony Orchestra—Dino Anagnost directing, with Marianna Christos, soprano; Shirley Love, mezzo-soprano; Jon Garrison, tenor; and Richard T. Gill, bass. (Alice Tully Hall. Sunday, June 10, at 7.)

Musica Sacra "Basically Bach"—At Avery Fisher Hall, the first three in a series of six all-Bach concerts. Monday, June 11, at 7:30: Richard Westenburg directing the orchestra and chorus in a performance of Bach's B-Minor Mass, with Faye Robinson, soprano; Shirley Love, mezzo-soprano; James Hoback, tenor; and John Cheek, bass. . . . ¶ Wednesday, June 13, at 8: Rosalyn Tureck playing the harpsichord and piano. . . . ¶ Friday, June 15, at 8: Margaret Hillis directing the orchestra and chorus, with Susan Belling, soprano; Elaine Bonazzi, mezzo-soprano; Seth McCoy, tenor; Thomas Paul, bass; and Martin Berinbaum, trumpet.

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Texas Girls' Choir—Shirley Carter directing. (Christ Church United Methodist, Park Ave. at 60th St. 838-3036. Friday, June 15, at 7.)

New York Motet Choir—Stephen Sturk directing a program entitled "English Music from Byrd to Britten." The final concert of the season. (Alice Tully Hall. Saturday, June 16, at 8.)

RECITALS

Western Wind—A vocal sextet in a program of a-cappella music by New York composers. (Abraham Goodman House, 129 W. 67th St. Wednesday, June 6, at 8. Tickets at the box office on the night of the concert.)

Elizabeth Rich—Piano, playing a program of music by Robert and Clara Schumann. (Alice Tully Hall. Friday, June 8, at 8.)

Ronald Feldman—Cello. (Carnegie Recital Hall. Monday, June 11, at 8.)

Haskell Small—Piano. (Kaufmann Concert Hall, 92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 427-6000. Tuesday, June 12, at 8.)

Ivan Rebroff—Bass. (Carnegie Hall. Saturday, June 16, at 8.)

IN THE COUNTRY

Caramoor Festival—Opening performances of the season, which will run through Sunday, Aug. 12—Saturday, June 16, at 9: Laszlo Heltay conducting the Caramoor Festival Orchestra in a benefit performance of a Respighi double bill, the American première of his opera "Lucrezia" (with Eleanor Bergquist, soprano; Diane Curry, mezzo-soprano; James McCray, tenor; William Metcalf, baritone; and others) and "Gli Uccelli," danced to by Kay Mazzo and Peter Martins with other members of the New York City Ballet. . . . ¶ Sunday, June 17, at 5:30: The Music Project, with Carrol Anne Curry, mezzo-soprano. (Katonah, N.Y. For information about tickets, call 914 232-4206.)

Saratoga Performing Arts Center—Monday, June 11, at 7: The Allman Brothers Band. . . . ¶ Friday, June 15, at 7: Journey. . . . ¶ Saturday and Sunday, June 16-17, at 7: The Marshall Tucker Band and Pure Prairie League. (Saratoga Springs. For information about tickets, call 977-9020, in New York.)

SPORTS

Baseball—**YANKEES** at Yankee Stadium: Vs. Minnesota, Wednesday, June 6, at 8, and Thursday, June 7, at 2. . . . **METS** at Shea Stadium: Vs. Houston, Friday, June 8, at 8:05, and Saturday and Sunday, June 9-10, at 2:05. . . . ¶ Cincinnati, Monday through Wednesday, June 11-13, at 8:05. . . . ¶ Atlanta, Friday, June 15, at 8:05, and Saturday, June 16, at 7:05.

Crew—Yale-Harvard Regatta. (New London. Saturday, June 9, starting at 5:15; varsity race at 6:45.)

Racing—At **BELMONT:** Mondays and Wednesdays through Saturdays at 1, and Sundays at 1:05; through Monday, July 30. The Belmont, Saturday, June 9; the Mother Goose, Sunday, June 10; and the Bowling Green Handicap, Saturday, June 16. (Frequent trains leave Penn Station for the track Mondays and Wednesdays through Fridays between 11 and 1:10, and Saturdays and Sundays between 11 and 1:15.) . . . **ATLANTIC CITY,** Mays Landing, N.J.: Mondays through Wednesdays, and Fridays, at 7:30, and Saturdays at 1:30; through Saturday, Sept. 15. . . . **MONMOUTH PARK,** Oceanport, N.J.: Weekdays at 1:30; through Monday, Sept. 3. (A special train leaves Penn Station for the track Saturdays at 11:35.)

Soccer—At Giants Stadium, the Meadowlands: Cosmos vs. the Argentinian national team, Wednesday, June 6, at 9. . . . ¶ Cosmos vs. Dallas, Sunday, June 10, at 2:30. (For information about tickets for both matches, call 265-8600.)

Trotting—At **YONKERS RACEWAY:** Weeknights at 8; through Saturday, July 14. . . . **SARATOGA RACEWAY,** Saratoga Springs: Weeknights at 8:15; through Saturday, Nov. 17. . . . **MEADOWLANDS RACETRACK:** Weeknights at 8; through Saturday, Aug. 4.

Yachting—Start of the Annapolis-to-Newport race, Saturday, June 16.

ET ALIA

Auctions—At **SOTHEBY PARKE BERNET,** 980 Madison Ave., at 76th St. (Exhibition hours: Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5.) The final seven sales of articles from the estate of Benjamin Sonnenberg. Wednesday, June 6, at 2: Silver, Sheffield and other plate, *objets de vertu,* and pewter. . . . Thursday, June 7, at 10:15: Nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century paintings and drawings. . . . Thursday, June 7, at 2: Brass, including candelabra and other lighting devices, and hearth equipment. . . . Friday, June 8, at 10:15: Antiquities, pottery, rugs, Oriental works of art, autographs, and manuscripts. . . . Friday, June 8, at 2, and Saturday, June 9, at 2: Furniture, clocks, and other decorative objects. . . . Saturday, June 9, at 10:15: Impressionist and modern paintings, drawings, and sculptures. . . . ¶ Wednesday, June 13, at 10:15 and 2: Chinese paintings and other works of art, from various owners. Exhibition starts Saturday, June 9. . . . ¶ Wednesday, June 13, at 2, and Thursday, June 14, at 10:15 and 2: English and Continental ceramics, from several owners. Exhibition starts Saturday, June 9. . . . **CHRISTIE'S,** Park Ave. at 59th St. (Exhibition hours: Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5.) Three sales from the collection of Mrs. John W. Christner. Thursday, June 7, at 2:30: English and American silver, Russian works of art, *objets de vertu,* and enamels. . . . Friday, June 8, at 2:30: European porcelains and faience. . . . Saturday, June 9, at 2:30: French porcelains.

THE GREAT OUTDOORS

(If the weather looks doubtful, call the New York Parks Department, 755-4100, for news. The same number may be called for information about all free entertainment in the city.)

Metropolitan Opera, Concert Productions—**CENTRAL PARK'S SHEEP MEADOW:** Tuesday, June 12, at 8:30 (rain date, June 14), "Aida," with Ljiljana Molnar-Talajic, Mignon Dunn, Cornell MacNeil, and Jerome Hines; conducted by Michelangelo Veltri. . . . **CLOVE LAKES PARK,** Staten Island: Wednesday, June 13, at 8:30 (rain date, June 14), "La Traviata," with Eugenia Moldoveanu, Giuliano Ciannella, Mario Sereni, and Gene Boucher; James Conlon. . . . **MARINE PARK,** Brooklyn: Friday, June 15, at 8:30 (rain date, June 17), "Aida," with the same cast as Tuesday. . . . **CUNNINGHAM PARK,** Queens: Saturday, June 16, at 8:30 (rain date, June 17), "La Traviata," with the same cast as Wednesday.

Walking Tour—A conducted tour of Greenwich Village, sponsored by the Museum of the City of New York. Sunday, June 10, starting at the corner of Gay and Christopher Streets, at 2:30. For information, call 534-1672.

Washington Square Outdoor Art Exhibit—The semiannual show will be on view Saturday and Sunday, June 9-10, from noon until sundown.

Brooklyn Botanic Garden—The Cranford Rose Garden opens for the season on Friday, June 8, and will be in bloom for the next several months. (Tuesdays through Fridays, 9 to 4; Saturdays and Sundays, 10 to 4.)

Lincoln Center—To mark the twentieth anniversary of Lincoln Center's groundbreaking, there is a *son-et-lumière* spectacle every clear evening at 9. Five screens, covering the five high windows of the Metropolitan Opera façade, are unfurled, making a single huge unit on which all sorts of film clips and stills are projected. Following the film, there is a significant display of lights.

Deep Breathing—The roadways in Central Park are given over to joggers, roller skaters, skateboarders, and strollers except for workday rush hours. The park closes at ten at night Mondays through Thursdays.

GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

THE MOVIE HOUSES

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16

ALL FILMS PLAYING AT EAST SIDE AND WEST SIDE NEIGHBORHOOD HOUSES ARE DESCRIBED IN BRIEF IN A SECTION STARTING ON PAGE 20. FILMS PLAYING AT TIMES SQUARE AND REVIVAL HOUSES ARE SO DESCRIBED ONLY IF A DAGGER ACCOMPANIES THE THEATRE LISTING.

EAST SIDE

Little Theatre, Public Theatre, 425 Lafayette St. (677-6925; theatre opens in the late afternoon.)
Through June 10: "The Searchers."
June 11: Theatre closed.
From June 12: "The Father."

Art, 36 E. 8th. (473-7014)
"Get Out Your Handkerchiefs."

St. Marks Cinema, 2nd Ave. at 8th. (533-9292)
Through June 12: "Superman" and "American Hot Wax."
From June 13: To be announced.

Gramercy, Lexington at 23rd. (475-1660)
"The China Syndrome."

Bay Cinema, 2nd Ave. at 32nd. (679-0160)
Through June 14: "Grease."
From June 15: "Prophecy."

Murray Hill, 160 E. 34th. (685-7652)
"Phantasm."

34th St. East, 241 E. 34th. (683-0255)
"Manhattan."

Eastside Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 55th. (755-3020)
Through June 7: "The Innocent."
June 8-14: "Get Out Your Handkerchiefs."
From June 15: "Butch and Sundance: The Early Days."

Sutton, 3rd Ave. at 57th. (759-1411)
"A Little Romance."

Trans-Lux East, 3rd Ave. at 58th. (759-2262)
"Malicious."

Plaza, 42 E. 58th. (355-3320)
Through June 14: "Hair."
From June 15: "The Kids Are Alright."

Baronet, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (355-1663)
"Manhattan."

Coronet, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (355-1663)
Through June 7: "Manhattan."
From June 8: "Players."

D. W. Griffith, 235 E. 59th. (759-4630)
Through June 7: "Phantasm."
June 8-14: "Norma Rae."
From June 15: "Hair."

Cinema I, 3rd Ave. at 60th. (753-6022)
"Saint Jack."

Cinema II, 3rd Ave. at 60th. (753-0774)
"Newsfront."

Gemini 1, 2nd Ave. at 64th. (832-1670)
Through June 14: "Teresa the Thief."
From June 15: "Walk Proud."

Gemini 2, 2nd Ave. at 64th. (832-2720)
Through June 7: "Get Out Your Handkerchiefs."
From June 8: "Sextette."

Beekman, 2nd Ave. at 66th. (737-2622)
Through June 7: "Beyond the Poseidon Adventure."
June 8-14: "The Promise."
From June 15: "The In-Laws."

Loews New York 1, 2nd Ave. at 67th. (744-7339)
Through June 14: "Love at First Bite."
From June 15: "Rocky II."

Loews New York 2, 2nd Ave. at 67th. (744-7339)
"Alien."

68th St. Playhouse, 3rd Ave. at 68th. (734-0302)
"La Cage aux Folles."

Loews Tower East, 3rd Ave. at 71st. (879-1313)
Through June 14: "Winter Kills."
From June 15: "Goldengirl."

72nd Street East, 1st Ave. at 72nd. (288-9304)
Through June 7: "The China Syndrome."
June 8-14: "Superman."
From June 15: To be announced.

Trans-Lux 85th St., Madison at 85th. (288-3180)
"The Deer Hunter."

U. A. East, 1st Ave. at 85th. (249-5100)
Through June 14: "Dawn of the Dead."
From June 15: "Game of Death."

Loews Orpheum, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (289-4607)
"Alien."

Loews Ciné, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (427-1332)
Through June 14: "Grease."
From June 15: "Prophecy."

86th St. East, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (249-1144)
"Hair."

R.K.O. 86th St., Lexington at 86th. (289-8900)
Theatre 1: Through June 7: "Battlestar Galactica." June 8-14: "Escape to Athena." From June 15: "Walk Proud."
Theatre 2: Through June 14: "Phantasm." From June 15: "The In-Laws."

WEST SIDE

Waverly, 6th Ave. at 3rd. (929-8037)
"Hair."

Greenwich, Greenwich Ave. at 12th. (929-3350)
Through June 7: "Winter Kills."
June 8-14: "Dawn of the Dead."
From June 15: "Rocky II."

Quad Cinema, 34 W. 13th. (255-8800)
Theatre 1: "Fedora."
Theatre 2: "The China Syndrome."
Theatre 3: "Norma Rae."
Theatre 4: Through June 14: "The Innocent." From June 15: "The Fragrance of Wild Flowers."

Guild, 33 W. 50th. (757-2406)
"Love at First Bite."

Ziegfeld, 141 W. 54th. (765-7600)
"The Prisoner of Zenda."

Festival, 6 W. 57th. (757-2715)
"The Deer Hunter."

Little Carnegie, 146 W. 57th. (246-5123)
"Manhattan."

Paris, 4 W. 58th. (688-2013)
Through June 7: "The Toy."
From June 8: "Down and Dirty."

Cinema 3, 2 W. 59th. (752-5959)
"Fedora."

Paramount, B'way at 61st. (247-5070)
Through June 14: "Hair."
From June 15: "The In-Laws."

Cinema Studio 1, B'way at 66th. (877-4040)
"The Tree of Wooden Clogs."

Cinema Studio 2, B'way at 66th. (877-4040)
"Death of a Bureaucrat."

Embassy 72nd St., B'way at 72nd. (724-6745)
"Get Out Your Handkerchiefs."

Loews 83rd Quad, B'way at 83rd. (877-3190)
Theatre 1: "Hair."
Theatre 2: Through June 14: "The Champ." From June 15: "Butch and Sundance: The Early Days."
Theatre 3: "The China Syndrome."
Theatre 4: Through June 14: "The Innocent." From June 15: "Game of Death."

New Yorker, B'way at 88th. (874-9189)
Through June 7: "The French Detective" and "Cat and Mouse."
June 8-14: "Sextette."
From June 15: "Ulysses."

Olympia, B'way at 107th. (865-8128)
Through June 7: "Love at First Bite" and "Convoy."
June 8-14: "Norma Rae" and "The Adventure of Sherlock Holmes' Smarter Brother."
From June 15: "Superman."

TIMES SQUARE

Criterion, B'way at 44th. (582-1795)
"Alien." (†)

Embassy 1, B'way at 46th. (757-2408)
"Dawn of the Dead." (†)

Embassy, B'way at 47th. (730-7262)
Theatre 2: Through June 14: "Sunnyside." From June 15: "The In-Laws." (†)
Theatre 3: "The China Syndrome." (†)
Theatre 4: "Coming Home."

Forum, B'way at 47th. (757-8320)
"Love at First Bite." (†)

Loews Astor Plaza, B'way at 44th. (869-8340)
Through June 14: "The Champ." (†) No performances on Monday, June 11.
From June 15: "Prophecy." (†)

Loews State 1, B'way at 45th. (582-5060)
Through June 7: "Grease." (†)
From June 8: "Players." (†)

Loews State 2, B'way at 45th. (582-5070)
Through June 14: "Phantasm." (†)
From June 15: "Goldengirl." (†)

National, B'way at 44th. (869-0950)
"Winter Kills." (†)

Rivoli, B'way at 49th. (247-1633)
Through June 14: "Battlestar Galactica." (†)
From June 15: "Game of Death." (†)

R.K.O. Cinerama 1, B'way at 47th. (975-8366)
Through June 14: "Superman." (†)
From June 15: "Rocky II." (†)

R.K.O. Cinerama 2, B'way at 47th. (975-8369)
Through June 14: "The Deer Hunter." (†)
From June 15: "Walk Proud." (†)

Victoria, B'way at 46th. (354-5636)
Through June 14: "Beyond the Door, Part 2."
From June 15: "Butch and Sundance: The Early Days." (†)

REVIVAL HOUSES

Bleecker St. Cinema, 144 Bleecker St. (674-2560)
June 6: "Small Change" (1976), in French, directed by François Truffaut, with Geory Desmouceaux; and "The 400 Blows" (1959), in French, directed by François Truffaut, with Jean-Pierre Léaud.
June 7: "On the Waterfront" (1954), directed by Elia Kazan, with Marlon Brando, Lee J. Cobb, Eva Marie Saint, Karl Malden, and Rod Steiger; and "From Here to Eternity" (1953), directed by Fred Zinnemann, with Burt Lancaster, Montgomery Clift, Frank Sinatra, and Deborah Kerr.
June 8-9: "The Serpent's Egg" (1978), directed by Ingmar Bergman, with Liv Ullmann and David Carradine; and "The Conformist" (1970), in Italian, directed by Bernardo Bertolucci, with Jean-Louis Trintignant, Stefania Sandrelli, and Dominique Sanda.
June 10-11: "Lawrence of Arabia" (1962), directed by David Lean, with Peter O'Toole, Alec Guinness, Omar Sharif, José Ferrer, and Anthony Quinn.
June 12: "Ikiru" (1952), in Japanese, directed by Akira Kurosawa, with Takashi Shimura; and "Eyes, the Sea, and a Ball" (1967), in Japanese, directed by Keisuke Kinoshita.
June 13: "Elvira Madigan" (1967), in Swedish, directed by Bo Widerberg, with Thommy Berggren and Pia Degermark; and "Mayerling." (†)
June 14: "Touch of Evil" (1958), directed by Orson Welles, with Welles, Charlton Heston, and Janet Leigh; and "The Lady from Shanghai" (1948), directed by Orson Welles, with Rita Hayworth, Everett Sloane, and Welles.
June 15-16: "Goin' South" (†); and "Chinatown" (1974), directed by Roman Polanski,

with Jack Nicholson, Faye Dunaway, and John Huston.

Carnegie Hall Cinema, 7th Ave. at 57th. (757-2131)

June 6: "The Manxman" (1929), a silent film, directed by Alfred Hitchcock, with Anna Ondra, Carl Brisson, and Malcolm Keen; and "The Lady Vanishes" (1938), directed by Alfred Hitchcock, with Dame May Whitty, Margaret Lockwood, Michael Redgrave, Paul Lukas, and Cecil Parker.

June 7: "Masculine Feminine" (1965), in French, directed by Jean-Luc Godard, with Jean-Pierre Léaud and Chantal Goya; and "La Chinoise" (1967), in French, directed by Jean-Luc Godard.

June 8: "It's a Gift" (1934), directed by Norman Z. McLeod, with W. C. Fields; and "You're Telling Me" (1934), directed by Erle C. Kenton, with W. C. Fields, Buster Crabbe, Adrienne Ames, and Joan Marsh.

June 9: "8½" (1963), in Italian, directed by Federico Fellini, with Marcello Mastroianni, Sandra Milo, and Claudia Cardinale; and "A Drama of Jealousy" (1970; "The Pizza Triangle"), in Italian, directed by Ettore Scola, with Marcello Mastroianni, Monica Vitti, and Giancarlo Giannini.

June 10: "The Taming of the Shrew" (1967), directed by Franco Zeffirelli, with Elizabeth Taylor and Richard Burton; and "A Midsummer Night's Dream" (1935), directed by Max Reinhardt and William Dieterle, with James Cagney and Mickey Rooney.

June 11: "The Reckless Moment" (1949), directed by Max Ophuls, with James Mason and Joan Bennett; and "La Ronde." (†)

June 12: "Obsession" (1976), directed by Brian De Palma, with Cliff Robertson and Geneviève Bujold; and "The Bride Wore Black" (1968), in French, directed by François Truffaut, with Jeanne Moreau.

June 13: "The 39 Steps" (†); and "Number Seventeen" (1932), directed by Alfred Hitchcock, with Leon M. Lion and Anne Grey.

June 14: "La Grande Illusion" (1937), in French, directed by Jean Renoir, with Erich von Stroheim, Jean Gabin, Pierre Fresnay, and Marcel Dalio; and "The Crime of Monsieur Lange." (†)

June 15: "Yojimbo" (1961), in Japanese, directed by Akira Kurosawa, with Toshiro Mifune; and "Zatoichi at Large" (1973), in Japanese, directed by Kazuo Mori.

June 16: "Persona" (†); and "3 Women" (1977), directed by Robert Altman, with Shelley Duvall, Sissy Spacek, and Janice Rule.

Cinema Village, 22 E. 12th. (924-3363)

Through June 7: "Max Havelaar" (1976), in Dutch, directed by Fons Rademakers.

June 8-9: "An Unmarried Woman" (1978), directed by Paul Mazursky, with Jill Clayburgh, Alan Bates, Michael Murphy, and Lisa Lucas; and "Bob & Carol & Ted & Alice" (1969), directed by Paul Mazursky, with Natalie Wood, Robert Culp, Elliott Gould, and Dyan Cannon.

June 10-11: "The Duellists" (†); and "Joseph Andrews" (1978), directed by Tony Richardson, with Ann-Margret, Peter Firth, and Beryl Reid.

June 12: "A Perfect Couple" (†); and "3 Women" (1977), directed by Robert Altman, with Shelley Duvall, Sissy Spacek, and Janice Rule.

June 13-14: "To Have and Have Not" (†); and "The Big Sleep" (1946), directed by Howard Hawks, with Humphrey Bogart, Lauren Bacall, and Martha Vickers.

June 15-16: "In the Realm of the Senses" (1977), in Japanese, directed by Nagisa Oshima, with Eiko Matsuda and Tatsuya Fuji; and "Inserts" (1976), directed by John Byrum, with Richard Dreyfuss.

8th St. Playhouse, 52 W. 8th. (674-6515; Mondays through Fridays, theatre opens in the late afternoon.)

Through June 7: "I Could Go On Singing" (1963), directed by Ronald Neame, with Judy Garland, Dirk Bogarde, Jack Klugman, and Aline MacMahon; and "Judgment at Nuremberg" (1961), directed by Stanley Kramer, with Spencer Tracy, Burt Lancaster, Marlene Dietrich, Richard Widmark, Maximilian Schell, and Judy Garland.

From June 8: "Sextette." (†)

Regency, B'way at 67th. (724-3700)

June 6: "Man Hunt" (1941), directed by Fritz Lang, with Joan Bennett, Walter Pidgeon, George Sanders, John Carradine, and Roddy McDowall; and "Kiss of Death" (1947), directed by Henry Hathaway, with Victor Mature, Richard Widmark, Coleen Gray, and Brian Donlevy.

June 7-9: "Blood and Sand" (1941), directed by Rouben Mamoulian, with Tyrone Power, Rita Hayworth, Linda Darnell, John Carradine, and Anthony Quinn; and "The Black Swan" (1942), directed by Henry King, with Maureen O'Hara, Tyrone Power, Laird Cregar, Thomas Mitchell, and George Sanders.

June 10-11: "The Little Princess" (1939), directed by Walter Lang, with Shirley Temple, Richard Greene, Anita Louise, Ian Hunter, and Cesar Romero; and "Sitting Pretty." (†)

June 12-13: "The Hustler" (†) and "Nightmare Alley." (†)

June 14-16: "Viva Zapata" (†); and "The Mark of Zorro" (1940), directed by Rouben Mamoulian, with Tyrone Power, Linda Darnell, Basil Rathbone, and Gale Sondergaard.

Thalia, B'way at 95th. (222-3370)

June 6: "Marius" (1931; directed by Alexander Korda), "Fanny" (1932; directed by Marc Allégret and Pierre Prévert), and "César" (1936; directed by Marcel Pagnol), all in French, with Pierre Fresnay, Orane Démazis, and Raimu as the title characters in this Pagnol trilogy.

June 7: "The Birthday Party" (1968), directed by William Friedkin, with Robert Shaw, Sydney Tafler, Patrick Magee, and Dandy Nichols; and "The Pumpkin Eater" (1964), directed by Jack Clayton, with Anne Bancroft, Peter Finch, James Mason, and Maggie Smith.

June 8-9: "Holiday" (1938), directed by George Cukor, with Katharine Hepburn, Cary Grant, Lew Ayres, Edward Everett Horton, and Doris Nolan; and "Sylvia Scarlett" (1936), directed by George Cukor, with Katharine Hepburn, Cary Grant, Edmund Gwenn, and Brian Aherne.

June 10: "Straw Dogs" (†) and "Junior Bonner." (†)

June 11: "Dark Victory" (1939), directed by Edmund Goulding, with Bette Davis, George Brent, Humphrey Bogart, Ronald Reagan, and Geraldine Fitzgerald; and "Humoresque." (†)

June 12: "Iphigenia" (†); and "State of Siege" (1973), in French, directed by Costa-Gavras, with Yves Montand.

June 13: "Under the Roofs of Paris" (1930), in French, directed by René Clair, with Albert Préjean; and "A Nous la Liberté" (1931), in French, directed by René Clair, with Raymond Cordy and Henri Marchand.

June 14: "Hell in the Pacific" (†) and "Leo the Last." (†)

June 15-16: "Rebecca" (1940), directed by Alfred Hitchcock, with Joan Fontaine, Laurence Olivier, Judith Anderson, George Sanders, and Florence Bates; and "Spellbound" (1945), directed by Alfred Hitchcock, with Ingrid Bergman, Gregory Peck, Michael Chekhov, John Emery, and Leo G. Carroll.

Theatre 80 St. Marks, 80 St. Marks Pl. (254-7400)

June 6: "Broadway Melody of 1936" (1935), directed by Roy Del Ruth, with Eleanor Powell, Jack Benny, Robert Taylor, and Frances Langford; and "Broadway Melody of 1938" (1937), directed by Roy Del Ruth, with Eleanor Powell, Robert Taylor, and Buddy Ebsen.

June 7: "Gentleman Jim" (1942), directed by Raoul Walsh, with Errol Flynn, Alexis Smith, William Frawley, and Jack Carson; and "Adventures of Don Juan" (1948), directed by Vincent Sherman, with Errol Flynn, Viveca Lindfors, Romney Brent, Ann Rutherford, and Alan Hale.

June 8: "Lady Sings the Blues" (1972), directed by Sidney J. Furie, with Diana Ross, Billy Dee Williams, and Richard Pryor; and "Leadbelly" (1976), directed by Gordon Parks, with Roger E. Mosley.

June 9-10: "Charlie Chan in Paris" (1935), directed by Lewis Seiler, with Warner Oland as the detective; and "Murder Over New York" (1940), directed by Harry Lackman, a Charlie Chan mystery, with Sidney Toler as the detective.

June 11: "The List of Adrian Messenger" (†); and "Father Brown, Detective" (1935), directed by Edward Sedgwick, with Paul Lukas, Walter Connolly, and Gertrude Michael.

June 12: "Romance" (1930), directed by Clarence Brown, with Greta Garbo, Gavin Gordon, Lewis Stone, and Elliott Nugent; and "Inspiration" (1931), directed by Clar-

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ence Brown, with Greta Garbo and Robert Montgomery.

June 13: "Tea and Sympathy" (1956), directed by Vincente Minnelli, with Deborah Kerr and John Kerr; and "Separate Tables" (1958), directed by Delbert Mann, with Rita Hayworth, Deborah Kerr, David Niven, Burt Lancaster, and Wendy Hiller.

June 14: "The Lodger" (1926), a silent film, directed by Alfred Hitchcock, with Ivor Novello; and "Hangover Square" (1945), directed by John Brahm, with Laird Cregar and Linda Darnell.

June 15-16: "Trouble in Paradise" (†) and "Design for Living." (†)

FILM LIBRARIES, ETC.

Museum of Modern Art, Roy and Niuta Titus Auditorium, 11 W. 53rd St. (956-7078)—June 7 at 2:30: "The Set-up" (1942), directed by Robert Wise, with Robert Ryan, Audrey Totter, and George Tobias. . . . ¶ June 7 at 6: "The Lost Patrol" (1934), directed by John Ford, with Victor McLaglen, Boris Karloff, Wallace Ford, and Reginald Denny. . . . ¶ June 7 at 8:30: "Holiday" (1930), directed by Edward H. Griffith, with Ann Harding, Mary Astor, and Edward Everett Horton. . . . ¶ June 8 at 2:30: "Crossfire" (1947), directed by Edward Dmytryk, with Robert Young, Robert Ryan, Robert Mitchum, and Gloria Grahame. . . . ¶ June 8 at 6: A program of films by Jules Schwerin. . . . ¶ June 9 at noon: "A Damsel in Distress" (1937), directed by George Stevens, with Fred Astaire, Joan Fontaine, George Burns, and Gracie Allen. . . . ¶ June 9 at 2:30: "Murder, My Sweet" (1945), directed by Edward Dmytryk, with Dick Powell, Claire Trevor, and Anne Shirley. . . . ¶ June 9 at 5: "Rancho Notorious" (1952), directed by Fritz Lang, with Marlene Dietrich, Arthur Kennedy, and Mel Ferrer. . . . ¶ June 10 at noon: "A Damsel in Distress." . . ¶ June 10 at 2:30: "Top Hat" (1935), directed by Mark Sandrich, with Fred Astaire, Ginger Rogers, and Erik Rhodes. . . . ¶ June 10 at 5: "Holiday." . . ¶ June 11 at noon: "Artpark People" (1976), directed by Michael Blackwood. . . . ¶ June 11 at 2:30: "Stage Door" (1937), directed by Gregory La Cava, with Katharine Hepburn, Ginger Rogers, Adolphe Menjou, Lucille Ball, and Eve Arden. . . . ¶ June 11 at 6: A program of films by Jan Rubin. . . . ¶ June 12 at noon: "Sort of a Commercial for an Icebag by Claes Oldenburg" (1970), directed by Michael Hugo; "Aves: Magnificent Frigate Bird, Great Flamingo" (1973), directed by Nancy Graves; and "Dwellings" (1973), directed by Charles Simmonds. . . . ¶ June 12 at 2:30: "Marie-Louise" (1943), in French and German, directed by Leopold Lindtberg, with Joslane, Heinrich Gertler, and Margrit Winter; English subtitles. . . . ¶ June 12 at 6: "Agee" (1979), directed by Ross Spears. . . . ¶ June 14 at 2:30: "America's Sweetheart: The Mary Pickford Story" (1978), directed by John Edwards, narrated by Henry Fonda. . . . ¶ June 14 at 6: "My Best Gal" (1927), a silent film, directed by Sam Taylor, with Mary Pickford and Buddy Rogers. . . . ¶ June 14 at 8:30: "Suds" (1920), a silent film, directed by Jack Dillon, with Mary Pickford. . . . ¶ June 15 at 2:30: "America's Sweetheart: The Mary Pickford Story." . . ¶ June 15 at 6: "Marie-Louise." . . ¶ June 16 at noon: "Angels with Dirty Faces" (1938), directed by Michael Curtiz, with James Cagney, Pat O'Brien, Humphrey Bogart, and the Dead End Kids. . . . ¶ June 16 at 2:30: "Little Annie Rooney" (1925), a silent film, directed by William Beaudine, with Mary Pickford and William Haines. . . . ¶ June 16 at 5: "Sparrows" (1926), a silent film, directed by William Beaudine, with Mary Pickford and Gustav von Seyffertitz. (A limited number of tickets are available, but only to those applying for them in person at the museum after *11 on the day of the showing.*)

Whitney Museum, 945 Madison Ave., at 75th St.—"I-You-He/She" (1978), a video installation by Taka Iimura. Continuous showings Tuesdays through Fridays from 1 to 7:45, and Saturdays and Sundays from noon to 5:45. Call desk (794-0630) for ticket information. Closed Mondays.

Film Forum, 15 Vandam St., three blocks south of Houston St., at Sixth Ave. (989-2994)—June 7-10: A program of five short films by Richard Serra. . . . ¶ Starting June 14: "The Kirlian Witness" (1978), directed by Jonathan Sarno, with Nancy Snyder, Joel Colodner, Ted Leplat, and Nancy Boykin. Showings Thursdays through Sundays at 7:45.

Anthology Film Archives, 80 Wooster St. (226-0010)—Programs by Bresson, Truffaut, Hill, Kaye, Sonbert, Brakhage, Kardish, and others. Showings at 7 and 9 (except June 11). Closed Sundays.

IN BRIEF

SEE ABOVE FOR THEATRE ADDRESSES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS. IF A MOVIE HAS BEEN REVIEWED IN THESE PAGES DURING THE PAST TWO YEARS, THE DATE OF ITS REVIEW IS GIVEN.

The Adventure of Sherlock Holmes' Smarter Brother (1975)—Gene Wilder's talent is evident in the many nice leafy touches, but in his first attempt at a tripleheader (writer-director-star) he shows poor judgment, and he gets bogged down in an overelaborate production. The idea—Holmes' bringing in his insanely jealous younger brother, Sigerson, to help on a case involving Queen Victoria's state secrets—has mouth-watering possibilities, but they aren't developed. There's no mystery, and since you can't have a parody of a mystery without a mystery, there's no comic suspense. And Wilder, keeping his eye on his responsibilities as a director, loses his performing rhythm. A vaudeville number is disconcertingly like the specialty number in Mel Brooks' "Young Frankenstein" (which Wilder co-wrote and starred in) and calls attention to the general similarity between the two films. With Madeline Kahn, Marty Feldman, Dom DeLuise, Leo McKern, and Roy Kinnear. (Olympia; June 8-14.)

Alien—With Tom Skerritt, Sigourney Weaver, and Veronica Cartwright; directed by Ridley Scott. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Loews New York 2, Loews Orpheum, and Criterion.)

American Hot Wax (1978)—Cheerfully, trashily enjoyable, even though the hero, the disc jockey Alan Freed (well played by Tim McIntire), is made so righteous that he's like Buford Pusser fighting the enemies of rock 'n' roll. The moviemakers (the director Floyd Mutrux, the producer Art Linson, the screenwriter John Kaye) should have had more trust in the fifties rock milieu and in their own talents. Freed's secretary, Sheryl (Fran Drescher), is so entertainingly shrill that she might have had Jean Harlow for a voice teacher; his shovel-faced chauffeur, Mookie (Jay Leno), teases her and keeps her shrieking in outrage. This is a super B movie. With Laraine Newman, Chuck Berry, Jerry Lee Lewis, and Moosie Drier as the twelve-year-old president of the Buddy Holly Fan Club (five thousand members). The lively cinematography is by William A. Fraker. (Reviewed in our issue of 3/20/78.) (St. Marks Cinema; through June 12.)

Battlestar Galactica—With Richard Hatch, Dirk Benedict, and Lorne Greene. Directed by Richard A. Colla. (R.K.O. 86th St.; through June 7. . . . ¶ Rivoli; through June 14.)

Beyond the Poseidon Adventure—With Michael Caine, Sally Field, Telly Savalas, Peter Boyle, and Jack Warden; directed by Irwin Allen. (Beekman; through June 7.)

Butch and Sundance: The Early Days—With Tom Berenger and William Katt, directed by Richard Lester. (Eastside Cinema, Loews 83rd Quad, and Victoria; starting June 15.)

La Cage aux Folles—A brilliant comedy about a pair of aging homosexuals, one of whom has had a son; the son is eager to marry, his fiancée is extremely conventional, and her family wishes to make the acquaintance of his family. Trouble in paradise, here known as Saint-Tropez. Edouard Molinaro directed. In French. (5/28/79) (68th St. Playhouse.)

Cat and Mouse (1978)—Lelouch at his most tricksy and fake lyric, making a thriller with the inappropriately intelligent and beautiful Michèle Morgan as the wife of a film producer and high-rise builder. The plot involves rude and rich servants, an insurance man who turns up at a race track, and a charming, rotten detective, played by Serge Reggiani. His attempts at being keen-eyed are rather slothful, for what he really wants to be is a novelist. The film is spoiled by a moony benevolence. In French. (5/22/78) (New Yorker; through June 7.)

The Champ—A remake of the 1931 film. With Jon Voight, Faye Dunaway, and Ricky Schroder; directed by Franco Zeffirelli. (Loews 83rd Quad; through June 14. . . . ¶ Loews Astor Plaza; through June 14. No performances on Monday, June 11.)

The China Syndrome—Directed by James Bridges, with Jane Fonda as a TV commentator named Kimberly Wells who learns that a nuclear-power station in Southern California appears likely—through carelessness, fibbing, and big-business interests—to kill off a lot of the population of the state. The man who sees the danger is played by Jack Lemmon. (4/2/79) (Gramercy, Quad Cinema, Loews 83rd Quad, and Embassy. . . . ¶ 72nd Street East; through June 7.)

Convoy—Sam Peckinpah's happy-go-lucky ode to the truckers on the road—a sunny, enjoyable picture with only ketchup being splattered (in a mock fight in a diner). The setting is the American Southwest (with lighting that suggests J. M. W. Turner), and the theme is the pettiness of men's quarrels contrasted with the spaciousness of the land. The script fails to dramatize this disparity, and the film, which barely introduces its characters, seems silly at times. However, the trucks give real performances: Peckinpah uses the big rigs anthropomorphically, and while watching this picture, you recover the feelings you had as a child about the power and size and noise of trucks, and their bright, distinctive colors. Graeme Clifford's editing provides fast, hypnotic rhythms, and sequences with the trucks low in the frame and most of the image given over to skies with brilliant white clouds are poetic gestures, like passages in Dovzhenko. As a horny trucker, Kris Kristofferson lacks the common touch that might have given the movie some centrifugal force, though he's as majestic-looking as the big trucks. With J. D. Kane as Big Nasty, Ernest Borgnine as a vindictive lawman, Cassie Yates as a sad-eyed waitress, and the infuriating Ali MacGraw exercising her nostrils. (9/25/79) (Olympia; through June 7.)

The Crime of Monsieur Lange (1935)—Directed by Jean Renoir—not at the great peak of his "Rules of the Game" but very much the same man. René Lefèvre plays M. Lange, technically guilty of murder but not morally. With Jules Berry. In French. (Carnegie Hall Cinema; June 14.)

Dawn of the Dead—With David Emge and Ken Foree, directed by George A. Romero. (Embassy 1. . . . ¶ Greenwich; June 8-14. . . . ¶ U.A. East; through June 14.)

Death of a Bureaucrat (1966)—An extraordinarily funny comedy, made in Cuba, about the slow torture we all suffer at the hands of government agencies. The director is Tomás Gutiérrez Alea, evidently a shrewd and witty man, who is not in the least afraid of Chaplinesque slapstick. In Spanish. (5/28/79) (Cinema Studio 2.)

The Deer Hunter—A romantic adolescent-boy's view of friendship, with the Vietnam War seen in the Victorian terms of such movies as "The Lives of a Bengal Lancer"—as a test of men's courage. This is the fullest screen treatment so far of the mystic bond of male comradeship, and it has an inchoate, stirring quality. With Robert De Niro, Christopher Walken, Meryl Streep, John Cazale, and John Savage. Directed by Michael Cimino. (12/18/78) (Trans-Lux 85th St., and Festival. . . . ¶ R.K.O. Cinerama 2; through June 14.)

Design for Living (1933)—Noël Coward's famous play, filmed by Ernst Lubitsch, with a screenplay by Ben Hecht. Though Hecht swore that he had deleted all but one of Coward's actual lines, the Coward temperament is intact. Gary Cooper is miscast in Coward's part, but Fredric March and Miriam Hopkins muster some of the freebooting stylishness. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; June 15-16.)

Down and Dirty—With Nino Manfredi, directed by Ettore Scola. In Italian. (Paris; starting June 8.)

The Duellists (1978)—An adaptation of Joseph Conrad's Napoleonic-period story "The Duel," about a cavalry officer's sudden flare-up of rage over a trifling, imagined insult by another officer, which grows into a private war. The hussars (Harvey Keitel and Keith Carradine) go on fighting for over fifteen years,

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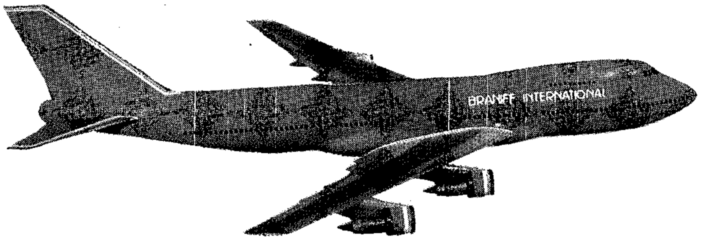

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and the origin of the quarrel becomes lost in legend, like the causes of the larger wars that they're both fighting in. This English production—a first film by the director Ridley Scott—is consistently entertaining and eerily beautiful. Its special quality is in its Géricault-like compositions; what keep them from palling is that they have a graphic power of their own, and they're coolly impassioned—a story of obsessive enmity is being told by way of these ravishing yet unsettling images. The mixed American and British cast includes Cristina Raines, Albert Finney, Alan Webb, Edward Fox, Diana Quick, Jenny Runacre, Robert Stephens, Tom Conti, and Meg Wynn Owen. (1/23/78) (Cinema Village; June 10-11.)

Escape to Athena—With Roger Moore, Telly Savalas, David Niven, and Elliott Gould; directed by George D. Cosmatos. (R.K.O. 86th St.; June 8-14.)

The Father—Directed by Yilmaz Guney. In Turkish. (Little Theatre, Public Theatre; starting June 12.)

Fedora—Billy Wilder, a director of increasingly thin-ice wit, takes a risk with a mystery film about a legendary recluse, obviously based on public notions of Garbo, who is played by Hildegard Knef and Marthe Keller. (Yes, two actresses: therein lies the trap.) William Holden plays an indigent film producer, on the hunt for Fedora, who keeps up a grand front but lives in the cheapest of hotel rooms. Echoes of "Sunset Boulevard." (4/23/79) (Quad Cinema, and Cinema 3.)

The Fragrance of Wild Flowers—Directed by Srdjan Karanovic. In Yugoslavian. (Quad Cinema; starting June 15.)

The French Detective—With Lino Ventura, Patrick Dewaere, and Victor Lanoux; directed by Pierre Granier-Deferre. In French. (New Yorker; through June 7.)

Game of Death—A recently completed film, with Bruce Lee, Gig Young, Dean Jagger, Colleen Camp, and Hugh O'Brian. (U.A. East, Loews 83rd Quad, and Rivoli; starting June 15.)

Get Out Your Handkerchiefs—Bertrand Blier's new sex comedy is flagrantly funny in a slangy, buoyant, unpredictable way. Like his earlier "Going Places," it's about two pals (played by the same actors—Gérard Depardieu and Patrick Dewaere) who don't really understand women, and their not understanding women is part of their bond. This time, the two aren't roughnecks; they're polite, respectable men, for whom women are like another species. With the lovely, dark Carole Laure as Depardieu's wife and Dewaere's mistress, Michel Serrault as the neighbor, and Riton as the Mozartean prodigy. In French. (10/16/78) (Art, and Embassy 72nd St. . . . ¶ Gemini 2; through June 7. . . . ¶ Eastside Cinema; June 8-14.)

Goin' South—Jack Nicholson directed and plays a cackling, scratching, horny, mangy slob in this barnyard comedy set in the Old West. He's about to be strung up, but the Texas border town he's in has an unusual ordinance: a condemned outlaw can escape the noose if a woman of property agrees to marry him. A virginal young Miss Muffet type (Mary Steenburgen), who needs a man to work her gold mine, claims him, and the film is about their squabblings and misunderstandings until they find love—it's a mixture of "Blazing Saddles" and "The African Queen." Nicholson's prankish performance dominates the movie, and because his prankishness also comes out in the casting and the directing, the movie hasn't any stabilizing force; there's nothing to balance what he's doing—no one with a straitjacket. An actor-director who prances about the screen manically can easily fool himself into thinking that his film is jumping; Nicholson jumps, all right, but the movie is inert. With Veronica Cartwright and John Belushi. (12/11/78) (Bleecker St. Cinema; June 15-16.)

Goldengirl—With James Coburn, Leslie Caron, Robert Culp, Harry Guardino, Curt Jurgens, John Newcombe, and Susan Anton; directed by Joseph Sargent. (Loews Tower East, and Loews State 2; starting June 15.)

Grease—John Travolta and Olivia Newton-John in an evocation of the fifties at high school. The movie runs on pure ozone, good times, and an easy homesickness for a past decade that the people who lived through it will not find particularly missable. (6/26/78) (Loews State 1; through June 7. . . . ¶ Bay Cinema, and Loews Ciné; through June 14.)

Hair—A sunny film rendering of the harmonically not particularly distinguished stage musical of the sixties, directed by the Czech-born Miloš Forman, who has managed—in a very Slavic way—to make a benign small folk-town of New York. (4/16/79) (86th St. East, Waverly, and Loews 83rd Quad. . . . ¶ Plaza, and Paramount; through June 14. . . . ¶ D. W. Griffith; starting June 15.)

Hell in the Pacific (1969)—Lee Marvin and Toshiro Mifune are the stars and there's nobody else in the movie—just this American soldier and this Japanese soldier stranded on a Pacific island during the Second World War, and neither speaking a word of the other's language. Haven't you always longed for a movie full of Toshiro Mifune grunting and Lee Marvin muttering to himself? Actually Marvin is rather funny talking to himself, but the theme is—you guessed it—brotherhood. The director, John Boorman, and the cinematographer, Conrad Hall, get so glittering flashy that they make the Pacific island a pile of sequins, and Lalo Schifrin's score sparkles like the purest ersatz. (Thalia; June 14.)

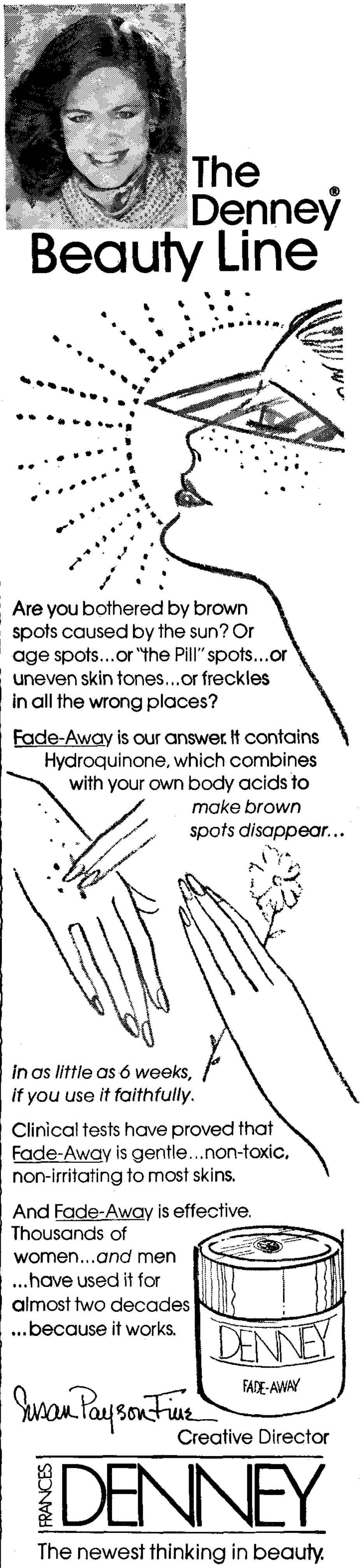
Humoresque (1946)—In this second version of Fannie Hurst's hokey weeper, the heroine (Joan Crawford) is myopic, dipsomaniacal, dissatisfied with her husband (Paul Cavanaugh), older than her ghetto-born violinist lover (John Garfield), and given to brooding heavily about the futility of a life devoid of everything but sables, limousines, Napoleon brandy, town houses, seashore estates, and enough liquid assets to make a Morgan partner's eyes widen. She bears her burdens gallantly, and when she realizes that her career as a social butterfly has not prepared her adequately to be the helpmate of her violinist she bravely wades out into the ocean and gurgles to her doom, wreathed in seaweed and clamshells. Clifford Odets worked on the update, and some of the dialogue is sharp-witted, but with frequent interruptions for big yeasty passages on the meaning of life and art. If Carol Burnett were to step in and take over, she'd hardly have to change a thing. Garfield saws away impressively while Isaac Stern is heard playing several violin concertos, and there are lines to treasure, such as Cavanaugh's remark about the music: "It has fire—rather like what you'd feel in a van Gogh painting." Jean Negulesco directed. As the hero's old neighborhood pal, Oscar Levant plays the piano and makes jokes; with J. Carrol Naish, Craig Stevens, Ruth Nelson, John Abbott, Fritz Leiber, and Robert (then Bobby) Blake. (Thalia; June 11.)

The Hustler (1961)—The test of what a man has inside him—the Hemingway type of story frequently set in the bullring or, in this country, in the world of sports, especially among prizefighters. Here, it is set in the world of pool sharks. Paul Newman is the young contender, Eddie Felson; Jackie Gleason is the old champ, Minnesota Fats; Piper Laurie is Eddie's girl; and George C. Scott his evil manager. Robert Rossen directed this fine movie, which is marred, however, by too conscious an effort at pungent dialogue and some rather murky notions of perversion and corruption. But it's a strong movie, and Newman gives a fine, emotional performance. With Murray Hamilton and Myron McCormick, who is stuck with a terrible pseudo-Odets role. (Regency; June 12-13.)

The In-Laws—With Peter Falk, Alan Arkin, and Nancy Dussault; directed by Arthur Hiller. (Beekman, R.K.O. 86th St., Paramount, and Embassy; starting June 15.)

The Innocent—For its first half, this Visconti film, based on the 1892 D'Annunzio novel, is a steamy comedy of manners. Tullio (Giancarlo Giannini), an aristocratic liberal, has become sexually indifferent to his innocent, round-cheeked, country-mousy wife (Laura Antonelli), and has turned to a liaison with an ardent, glittering countess (Jennifer O'Neill). But when his gentle wife becomes interested in another man, he falls passionately in love with her. In the second half, the picture runs out of steam and turns into a ponderous melodrama. In Italian. (2/12/79) (Eastside Cinema; through June 7. . . . ¶ Quad Cinema, and Loews 83rd Quad; through June 14.)

Iphigenia (1977)—There's fervor and dedication in Michael Cacoyannis's version of Euripides' "Iphigenia in Aulis;" what's missing is the excitement of a new interpretation. And was there a little too much Arthur Miller in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Euripides? The arguments have an ideological ring, but Costa Kazakos's robust, irresolute Agamemnon is very fine, and if Irene Papas' performance as Clytemnestra is overscaled, her Clytemnestra certainly makes you believe in the vengeance she will take on Agamemnon. The role suffers from a topical flaw: Clytemnestra's female rage sounds too much like what we've been hearing for the last five years. She has become a precursor, and less of a character. In Greek. (1/16/78) (Thalia; June 12.)

Junior Bonner (1972)—Sam Peckinpah's affectionate piece about the dead-and-gone past of rodeos, with very fine performances by Robert Preston as an aging roisterer of a father, Ida Lupino as a practical mother with a voice like a nutmeg grater and too much wisdom for her own comfort, and Steve McQueen as a roaming rodeo performer too young to be already so tarnished with disappointment but too old to be as easy a rider as he used to be. (Thalia; June 10.)

The Kids Are Alright—The Who, in concert and being interviewed. Directed by Jeff Stein. (Plaza; starting June 15.)

Leo the Last (1970)—Marcello Mastroianni as a foreign prince in London who tries to lead black slum dwellers in a struggle against his own family. A complex satiric fantasy that is gimmicky, too showy, but has some unusual directorial touches by John Boorman. The cast includes Billie Whitelaw and Calvin Lockhart. (Thalia; June 14.)

The List of Adrian Messenger (1963)—This detective-story film has many of the pleasures of the genre—phonetic clues, some fancy murder methods, a fox hunt, war-hero detectives. The leading roles are played by George C. Scott and Kirk Douglas, and there are several guest stars who appear in disguise (Tony Curtis, Frank Sinatra, Robert Mitchum, and Burt Lancaster). They're rather like those maddening suspicious characters in detective novels who seem to be introduced for the sole purpose of throwing dust in our eyes; the stardust is slightly irritating—you find yourself trying to clear up the incidental mystery and losing track of the action. Still, it's a fairly sophisticated diversion. Lancaster is amusing as a woman (though his drag sequence here doesn't compare with his prancing maiden in "The Crimson Pirate"). And there is a joker in the disguised pack: Mitchum, who defies makeup—when he peels off the layers, the wonder is that he could be wearing so much to so little purpose. John Huston directed, from Anthony Veiller's screenplay, based on Philip MacDonald's novel. The cast includes Clive Brook, Gladys Cooper, Dalio, Jacques Roux, John Merivale, Herbert Marshall, Noel Purcell, and a couple of Hustons. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; June 11.)

A Little Romance—A very, very little film about very, very little people (played by Diane Lane and Thelonious Bernard), enacting a latter-day Romeo and Juliet. Laurence Olivier lightens the general mediocrity with a performance as a debonair and blithe Frenchman who befriends the children. Directed by George Roy Hill. (5/7/79) (Sutton.)

Love at First Bite—With George Hamilton and Susan Saint James, directed by Stan Dragoti. (Guild, and Forum. . . . ¶ Olympia; through June 7. . . . ¶ Loews New York 1; through June 14.)

Malicious (1973; "Malizia")—A Sicilian comedy steeped in elegance and with an intense sense of the class system. It is made up of inappropriate sexual longings, clownishly dealt with; small boys' voyeurism; and financial stinginess mixed with sexual largesse. Danger, sweetness, and lust enter with a village girl called Angela (Laura Antonelli) into a house of mourning, where she is destined to plague and delight the whole family. A funny but oddly dated picture, marred by an outworn frivolity and naughtiness that is never very erotic. Directed by Salvatore Samperi. In Italian. (Trans-Lux East.)

Manhattan—This black-and-white film, directed by Woody Allen, is splendidly suited to this nearly totally black-and-white city. Isaac is the skinny and festive hero of its pared-down and exuberant script, by Woody Allen and Marshall Brickman. Woody Allen proceeds by giant strides: this film is even funnier than "Annie Hall," even more serious in its comedy than "Interiors." Photographed by Gordon Willis, with a true friend for Isaac in the part played by the indispensable Diane Keaton. (4/30/79) (34th St. East, Baronet, and Little Carnegie. . . . ¶ Coronet; through June 7.)

Mayerling (1937)—A beautifully made version of the royal romance, and perhaps the most memorable of all French romantic movies. (Its chief rival is "Pépé le Moko.") Anatole Litvak directed, and the doomed lovers are Charles Boyer and Danielle Darrieux. In French. (Bleecker St. Cinema; June 13.)

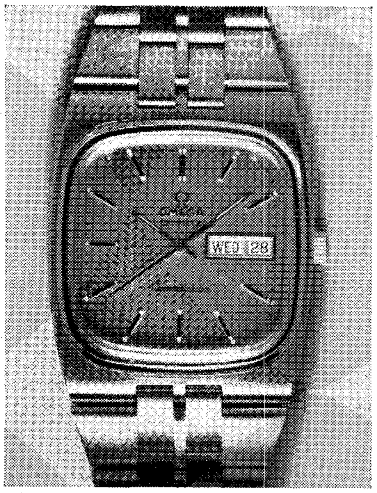
Newsfront—A film from Australia, directed by Phillip Noyce. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Cinema II.)

Nightmare Alley (1947)—A tough-minded treatment of telepathy. It starts in the carnival world, where the ultimate in how low a man can sink is represented by the Geek, who bites the heads off live chickens; shuddering dipsomaniacs take the job, for a bottle a day. We know that this is what is in store for the smart, smiling young climber Stan (Tyrone Power); *the shrewd, absorbing movie is* about how he gets to that point. Stan eagerly and ruthlessly learns everything he can from the plump mind reader Zeena (Joan Blondell, in a rich, intensely likable performance); using her tricks, he becomes a headliner in a Chicago night club and begins to sample the possibilities of spiritualist rackets. William Gresham's novel has been toned down slightly, but Jules Furthman's script has some daring hard edges. The film loses its imaginative energy once it moves out of the ripe, sleazy carny milieu, and the technique of the director, Edmund Goulding, is conventional, even a little stodgy. Still, the material is unusual and the cast first-rate. Power, who persuaded Twentieth Century-Fox to let him play this doublecrossing heel-charlatan, puts his black-Irish good looks to ambivalent effect. With Ian Keith, Coleen Gray, Helen Walker, Taylor Holmes, and Mike Mazurki. (Regency; June 12-13.)

Norma Rae—Directed by Martin Ritt, written by Irving Ravetch and Harriet Frank, Jr. (Mrs. Ravetch). An excellent, rather dated—thirtyish—film about the efforts of a spunky young woman in the South to unionize the textile industry. Sally Field, as the heroine, gives a terrific performance. (3/19/79) (Quad Cinema. . . . ¶ D. W. Griffith, and Olympia; June 8-14.)

A Perfect Couple—Directed by Robert Altman. About an affair between a classy Greek-American (Paul Dooley) and a girl who lives in a commune in a loft (Marta Heflin). The difference between them is oversimply expressed by their taste in music—he and his family, in a stiff way, like classical music; she likes the sort of mild humbug that is churned out by the ton on a lot of radio stations. This isn't Altman at his best, but there's no point in belaboring the matter. He has given us a lot of substantial and beautiful things, and one trusts him to do more. (4/16/79) (Cinema Village; June 12.)

Persona (1967)—In this film, as in his very early "Prison," Ingmar Bergman involves us in the making of a movie. He gives us a movie within a movie, but he seems hardly to have made the *enclosing* movie, and then he throws away the inner one. (You can *feel* it go—at the repeated passage, when the director seems to be trying an alternate way of shooting a sequence.) It's a pity, because the inner movie had begun to involve us in marvellous possibilities: an actress (Liv Ullmann) who has abandoned the power of speech is put in the care of a nurse (Bibi Andersson), and the nurse, like an analysand who becomes furious at the silence of the analyst, begins to vent her own emotional disturbances. The two women look very much alike, and Bergman plays with this resemblance photographically by suggestive combinations and superimpositions. Most movies give so little that it seems almost barbarous to object to Bergman's not giving us more in "Persona," but it is just because of the expressiveness and fascination of what we *are* given that the movie is so frustrating. There is, however, great intensity in many of the images, and there's one great passage: the nurse talks about a day and night of sex on a beach, and as she goes on talking, with memories of summer and nakedness and pleasure in her voice and the emptiness of her present life in her face, viewers may begin to hold their breath in fear that the director won't be able to sustain this almost intolerably difficult sequence. But he does, and it builds and builds and is completed. It's one of the



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rare truly erotic sequences in movie history. In Swedish. (Carnegie Hall Cinema; June 16.)

Phantasm—With Michael Baldwin, directed by Don Coscarelli. (Murray Hill. . . . ¶ D. W. Griffith; through June 7. . . . ¶ R.K.O. 86th St., and Loews State 2; through June 14.)

Players—With Ali MacGraw and Dean-Paul Martin, directed by Anthony Harvey. (Coronet, and Loews State 1; starting June 8.)

The Prisoner of Zenda—Peter Sellers in three roles, one of which is mercifully brief. Why was this foolish movie ever made? Ronald Colman is the only prisoner of Zenda worthy of the name. (6/4/79) (Ziegfeld.)

The Promise—With Kathleen Quinlan, Stephen Collins, and Beatrice Straight; directed by Gilbert Cates. (Beekman; June 8-14.)

Prophecy—With Talia Shire and Robert Foxworth, directed by John Frankenheimer. (Bay Cinema, Loews Ciné, and Loews Astor Plaza; starting June 15.)

Rocky II—With Sylvester Stallone, Talia Shire, Burgess Meredith, Burt Young, and Carl Weathers; directed by Stallone. (Loews New York 1, Greenwich, and R.K.O. Cinerama 1; starting June 15.)

La Ronde (1950)—Love makes the world go 'round in Max Ophuls' romantic, intricate, and rather tired version of the Schnitzler play, and the actors who move from one affair to the next include Gérard Philipe, Danielle Darrieux, Simone Signoret, Jean-Louis Barrault, Daniel Gélin, and Simone Simon. This 1950 film had censorship trouble and was cut in the heyday of its art-house fame; this version includes the cut footage. In French. (Carnegie Hall Cinema; June 11.)

Saint Jack—A film made by Peter Bogdanovich and set in 1971 in Singapore, where an American called Jack Flowers, played by Ben Gazzara (of the Actors' Studio), scrapes a stingy living promoting business for a Chinese ship-chandler's firm; off duty, he is a pimp with dreams of running the poshest whorehouse in the world. Denholm Elliott, as an accountant, acts with focus and alertness. The script is by Howard Sackler, Paul Theroux, and Mr. Bogdanovich. (5/7/79) (Cinema I.)

The Searchers (1956)—A little girl is kidnapped by Comanches; by the time her uncle, John Wayne, finds her, years have passed and she has turned into Natalie Wood. John Ford directed this leisurely, large-scale Western; the motives of the bitter, taciturn uncle are obscure throughout, and Ford's attempt at comic relief—male knockabout humor—is a fizzle. The cast includes Jeffrey Hunter, as Wayne's partner in the long search, and Vera Miles, Ward Bond, Antonio Moreno, Dorothy Jordan, John Qualen, and, in a small part, Mae Marsh. (Little Theatre, Public Theatre; through June 10.)

Sextette—With Mae West, Timothy Dalton, Dom DeLuise, and Tony Curtis; directed by Ken Hughes. (Gemini 2, and 8th St. Playhouse; starting June 8. . . . ¶ New Yorker; June 8-14.)

Sitting Pretty (1948)—Clifton Webb became a big box-office hit in this dumb yet lively and, on some levels, satisfying comedy. He plays a supercilious gentleman who moves in on an average disorderly family as a baby-sitter and brings discipline to the household. Actually, he becomes a domestic tyrant, cowing his charges with his haughtiness and reducing their parents (Robert Young and Maureen O'Hara) to the status of peasants. Audiences guffawed happily when he glared at the family's youngest, who was making a mess with his porridge, and placed the bowl over the baby's head. Webb is abetted by Richard Haydn as the adenoidal neighborhood gossip. Walter Lang directed, from F. Hugh Herbert's screenplay. (Regency; June 10-11.)

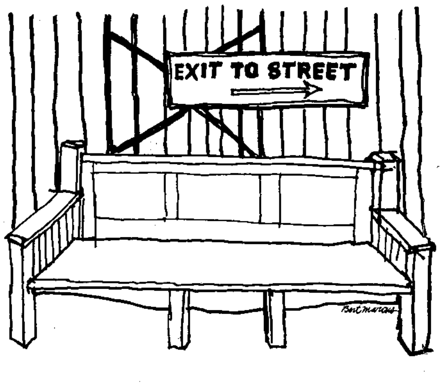
Straw Dogs (1972)—Dustin Hoffman plays a weakling mathematician who finds his manhood when he learns to kill, and the gifted young Susan George is his snarling, pouty wife—a little beast who wants to be made submissive. Machismo, sold under the now fashionable guise of the territorial imperative, and directed by Sam Peckinpah in a way that apparently affects many men at a very deep level. Probably one of the key films of the decade. (Thalia; June 10.)

Superman—Christopher Reeve, the young actor chosen to play the lead, is the best reason to see the film; he's immediately likable, with an open-faced, deadpan style that's just right for a windup hero. Though one of the two or three most expensive movies ever made, it's cheesy-looking, and the plotting is so hit-or-miss that the story never seems to get started; the special effects are far from wizardly, and the editing often seems hurried and jerky just at the crucial points. Directed by Richard Donner. With Marlon Brando, Gene Hackman, and Margot Kidder. (1/1/79) (St. Marks Cinema; through June 12. . . . ¶ R.K.O. Cinerama 1; through June 14. . . . ¶ 72nd Street East; June 8-14. . . . ¶ Olympia; starting June 15.)

Teresa the Thief—With Monica Vitti, directed by Carlo Di Palma. In Italian and English. (Gemini 1; through June 14.)

The 39 Steps (1935)—This suave, amusing spy melodrama is directed with so sure a touch that the suspense is charged with wit; it's one of the three or four best things Alfred Hitchcock has ever done. The lead, Robert Donat, was that rarity among English actors: a performer with both personal warmth and professional skill. The heroine is Madeleine Carroll. Hitchcock paired them off by the mischievous use of a gimmick: a man and a woman who detest each other are handcuffed together; as day wears into night, they fall in love. The movie thus contains an extra—implicit, as it were—element of bathroom-humor suspense. Among Hitchcock's other pleasing perversities was the casting of Godfrey Tearle, who looked astonishingly like Franklin Delano Roosevelt, as the chief enemy agent. The film also has one of his rare emotionally felt sequences: the brief, chilling scenes between Peggy Ashcroft and John Lauri as a mismated couple, joined together by real chains. John Buchan's novel was adapted by Charles Bennett, Ian Hay, and Alma Reville. (Carnegie Hall Cinema; June 13.)

To Have and Have Not (1944)—In this picture, Humphrey Bogart, the greatest cynical hero of them all, found himself in Martinique, where a beautiful big cat of a girl named Lauren Bacall slouched across the screen for the first time and managed to make the question "Anybody got a match?" sound like the most insolent and insinuating of demands. Howard Hawks directed this slickly professional, thoroughly enjoyable Second World War melodrama, which was taken from what Warner Brothers advertised as Ernest Hemingway's novel, with William Faulkner listed as co-author (with Jules Furthman) of the screenplay—making this the only movie on record with two Nobel Prize-winning authors. Don't be misled: it's the Warners' mixture as before—sex and politics—but better this time. Asked to explain the genesis of this film, Hawks explained that once when he and Ernest Hemingway were hunting together, he had claimed that he could take Hemingway's worst story and make a movie of it. Hemingway asked which was his worst, and Hawks said "To Have and Have Not." According to Hawks, Hemingway then explained that he had written it in one sitting when he needed money. Hawks made good on his boast, but he and the screenwriters cheated a bit: the movie deals with what may have occurred in the lives of the characters before the novel begins. (Footnotes for somebody's Ph.D.: the novel's ending was used to polish off John Huston's film version of Maxwell Anderson's dreary play "Key Largo;" the novel's plot was used for another movie, "The Breaking Point," directed by Michael Curtiz, in 1950; and the short story "One Trip Across," which Hemingway has expanded into "To Have and Have Not," was used for an Audie Murphy movie, "The Gun Runners," directed by Don Siegel, in 1958.) This film belongs to the movie era in which characters were clearly defined, and if a man was perverse, you knew he was a Nazi. The refreshingly, daringly sexy Bacall burst through the conventions of the era. A writer said of her that her "husky, underslung voice, which is ideal for the double-entendre, makes even her simplest remarks sound like jungle mating cries." Hoagy Carmichael provides the music and accompaniment for Miss Bacall's facial exercises; the singing voice is that of Andy Williams, and it never sounded sexier than when coming out of her. With Walter Brennan, Marcel Dalio, and Dan Seymour (literally, the heavy). (Cinema Village; June 13-14.)



The Toy—With Pierre Richard, directed by Francis Veber. In French. (Paris; through June 7.)

The Tree of Wooden Clogs—Directed by Ermanno Olmi. In Italian. (Cinema Studio 1.)

Trouble in Paradise (1932)—Ernst Lubitsch's favorite among his own pictures. Herbert Marshall is a polished crook, and his beloved is Miriam Hopkins, as a sweet-faced international pickpocket; both are trying to fleece a beautiful widow (Kay Francis). There is a lot of comedy in the moonstruck but practical style of Lubitsch's lovers, and in the cryptic way Edward Everett Horton suddenly remembers Marshall's identity, saying, "Tonsils! Positively tonsils!" (Theatre 80 St. Marks; June 15-16.)

Ulysses (1967)—An act of homage to Joyce's novel that is reasonably successful in providing a surface map of the comings and goings in town and "Nighttown" but that lacks the sensuality of the novel's prose. Joyce gives us the drama within Stephen's consciousness; the Joseph Strick film stays on the outside, and so Leopold Bloom, who is easier to represent, takes over. With Maurice Roeves as Stephen, Milo O'Shea as Bloom, and Barbara Jefford as Molly. (New Yorker; starting June 15.)

Viva Zapata! (1952)—Before the rifles of that infamous concealed regiment get poor Zapata (Marlon Brando), John Steinbeck's script has thoroughly done him in. Land and liberty, the simple slogans of the Mexican civil wars of 1911-19, are transformed into the American liberal clichés of 1952 and phrased in that slurpy imitation of simplicity and grandeur which some high-school English teachers call "poetry." The virtues of the production are in Elia Kazan's slam-bang direction: some of the scenes have startling immediacy; the fighting is first-rate; even the phony folklore is continuously interesting; there is a reminiscence of Malraux's "L'Espoir." And the actors are fun to watch: there's the magnetic young Brando (age twenty-seven) impersonating a great revolutionary leader—an illiterate young titan, a peasant and a thinker (and, in the time-worn actor-peasant tradition, he screws up his face when he has to think). And there are Anthony Quinn (his performance took the Academy Award for Best Supporting Actor) as Zapata's older brother; Jean Peters as Josefa; Joseph Wiseman, acting like some sinister mixture of Judas Iscariot and a junkie, as Fernando the journalist; Alan Reed as Pancho Villa; Lou Gilbert as Pablo; Margo as Soldadera; Harold Gordon as Madero; Frank Silvera as Huerta; and Mildred Dunnock and Arnold Moss. The film includes Steinbeck's folly: the famous, supposedly terribly touching wedding-night scene in which Zapata asks Josefa to teach him to read. (To deflower his virgin mind?) (Regency; June 14-16.)

Walk Proud—With Robby Benson, directed by Robert Collins. (Gemini 1, R.K.O. 86th St., and R.K.O. Cinerama 2; starting June 15.)

Winter Kills—A rampageous thriller written and directed by William Richert, from a novel by Richard Condon. John Huston is superb as a villainous old self-made millionaire, and Jeff Bridges is his all too dutiful son. Also on hand are Eli Wallach, Tony Perkins, Toshiro Mifune, Ralph Meeker, and Belinda Bauer. (6/4/79) (National. . . . ¶ Greenwich; through June 7. . . . ¶ Loews Tower East; through June 14.)

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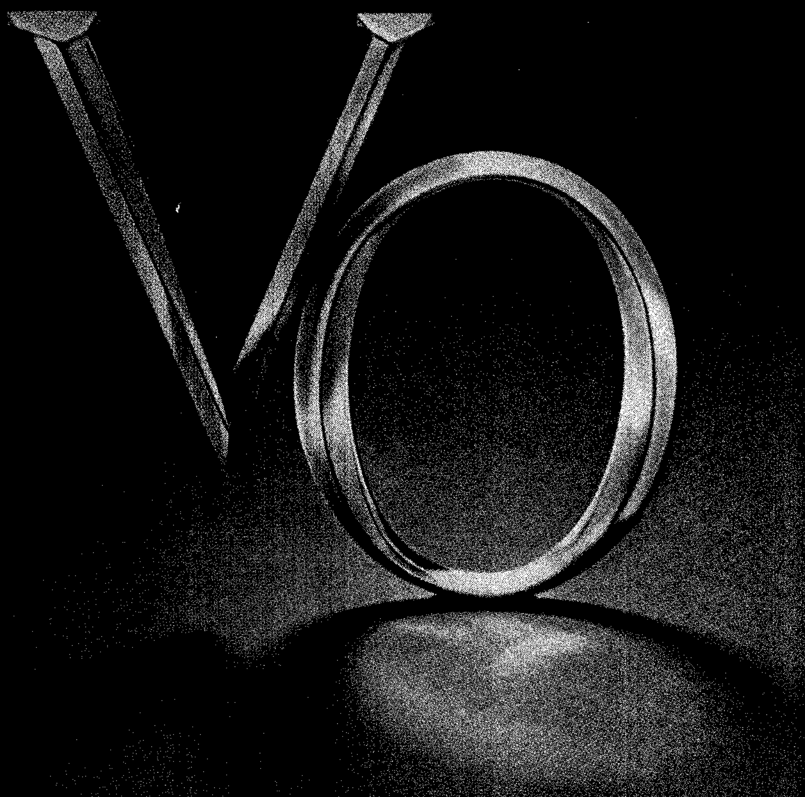

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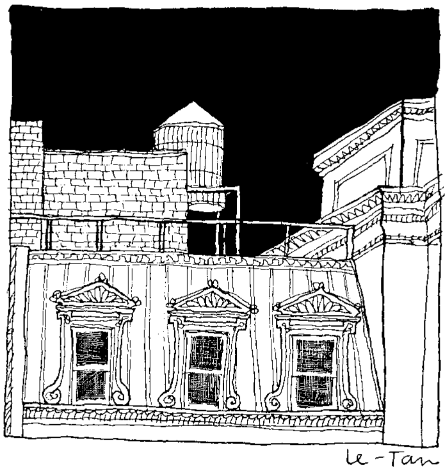
THE NEW YORKER

THE TALK OF THE TOWN

Notes and Comment

WITH the execution over the past few days of ten more men in Iran, the number of people killed by the newly installed authorities there reached a total of two hundred and fifty-six. We say "the new authorities," but in fact no one knows just who these authorities are. Ostensibly, the government is run by its Prime Minister, Mehdi Bazargan, but it has recently become obvious that he is in charge on paper only, and several times the world has witnessed the peculiar sight of a supposed government head "protesting" actions taken in the name of his government. In American terms, it would be as though one day the President had been discovered picketing the White House. Real power, according to news reports, is in the hands of a revolutionary *Komiteh*, whose members are anonymous and therefore unaccountable to anyone. It is the *Komiteh* that has authorized the execution of the two hundred and fifty-six people, after secret trials in which neither defense counsel nor defense witnesses were permitted to participate. Nobody knows how many of the victims actually committed crimes in the service of the Shah, and probably nobody ever will know; in dispensing with the procedures of justice, the *Komiteh* may also have dispensed with a piece of the historical record. Secret police have become a familiar feature of twentieth-century political life, but secret government, in which the identities even of the chief decision-makers are unknown, appears to be a recent innovation. The only precedent that comes to mind is the late regime in Cambodia, whose leaders hid their faces and their names from the world during the greater part of their shameful, blood-soaked rule. (A strange consequence of their policy was that when they were overthrown by the Vietnamese they had no one of their own to call upon to represent their case to the international community, and were forced to turn to a man whom they had held under house arrest—Prince Norodom Sihanouk—to help them out.)

It has often been remarked that successful revolutionaries are likely to make the mistake of trying to run their new government with the methods they used in overthrowing the old government. Somehow failing to realize that their opponents have been defeated, they overshoot their target and go on to make war against the rest of the population, and even against one another. Events in Iran, however, proceeded along different lines. The most notable feature of the Iranian revolution was its nonviolence. The Iranian rebels, who eventually seemed to include most of the population of the country, accomplished the apparent miracle of bringing down a dictatorship without resorting to armed rebellion—much less to terror. Their successful reliance upon nonviolent means, such as strikes and street demonstrations, in a contest against a repressive native regime seemed—and still seems, for that matter—to rank as a political discovery of some magnitude. The world is used to thinking of violence as the final arbiter in politics—especially in contests against dictatorial regimes—but Ayatollah Khomeini and his supporters appeared to have discovered in public opinion a power against which violence was helpless, or, at any rate, very weak. Mao Zedong (Mao Tse-tung) is often quoted as having said that power flows from the barrel of a gun; but, as the Iranian revolutionaries came to realize, the gun from which power flows is held by a hand, and the hand is directed by a mind. If enough minds can be changed, the guns change hands, and power will start flowing in a new direction. So great was Khomeini's success in changing minds that even the Shah seemed almost to have been won over to Khomeini's cause. In a remarkable speech a few months before his flight from Iran, the Shah accused officials of his government of corruption, and seemed to attempt to take sides with the public against them. (Thus, in one of history's odd coincidences, he set a sort of precedent for Bazargan's protest against the actions of *his* government.) At the end, the Shah appeared puzzled and irresolute. Seemingly undermined by his own doubt, he never did give the orders to the military which might have precipitated full-scale civil war. The exemplary restraint of the Shah's opposition raised the hope that in this case the revolutionaries *would* shape their government after the pattern of their revolution, and act justly and mercifully toward those whom they had overthrown. Instead, the men of the *Komiteh* inaugurated the secret trials and the executions. When the peace was won, they suddenly picked up the guns that they had shunned under conditions of war, and disfigured their victory with gratuitous bloodshed.



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Delegation

AS a group, the delegation of twelve women leaders from the People's Republic of China—it includes Ms.

Huang Ganying, the vice-chairperson of the All-China Women's Federation and a member of the standing committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference; Ms. Li Minhua, a professor and research fellow and the chairperson of the Solid Mechanics Section of the Institute of Mechanics in the Chinese Academy of Sciences; Ms. Liao Bingying, the deputy chief and chief engineer of the Peking No. 1 Machine Tool Factory; and Ms. Wang Jinfeng, a reporter for the *People's Daily*—makes an impression of contained energy, precisely focussed intensity, directness, refinement, and tact. The delegation, which was invited to visit the United States by the National Committee on United States-China Relations, a private nonprofit group, toured the First Women's Bank, on East Fifty-seventh Street, one recent misty morning, and we went along. When the Chinese women arrived at the bank—an institution that was set up in 1975 to help women who had suffered from discrimination at other banks—most of them were wearing loose-fitting, wide-pocketed pants suits in subtly varying shades, ranging from light gray to a darkish blue-gray; light-colored cotton blouses; and plain black low-heeled shoes. A few neutral-colored sweaters peeked out above the collars of the jackets. None of the women, who were all middle-aged, wore makeup. The delegation was greeted at the entrance to the bank by its president, Ms. Lynn Salvage, a dark-haired young woman whose manner was both dignified and jolly, and other officers of the bank. Next to the Chinese women, the American women, who by American standards were dressed conservatively, looked gaudy and flamboyant, as though they were preparing to take part in a drama, or even a magical rite. Next to the American women, the Chinese women looked austere and highly organized. Ms. Salvage first showed the visitors her own office, which looked out on the main floor of the bank through two interior glass walls; then she conducted them to the basement levels, where they saw an art gallery that shows work by women (sculptures by Edwina Sandys, many of them depicting semi-abstract forms of women in two-dimensional cutouts, were currently on display), the operations room, the bank vault, and the boardroom. Here the delegation members were invited to seat themselves at a long U-shaped table and listen to a brief description of the bank by Ms. Salvage. The bank had been founded because "there was a need at the time for women to have their own bank," she said, and she continued, "At the same time that we opened the bank, the government, which may have had a guilty conscience, passed the Equal Credit Opportunity Act. Today, eighty per cent of the bank's stockholders are female, and the bank is run mainly by women."

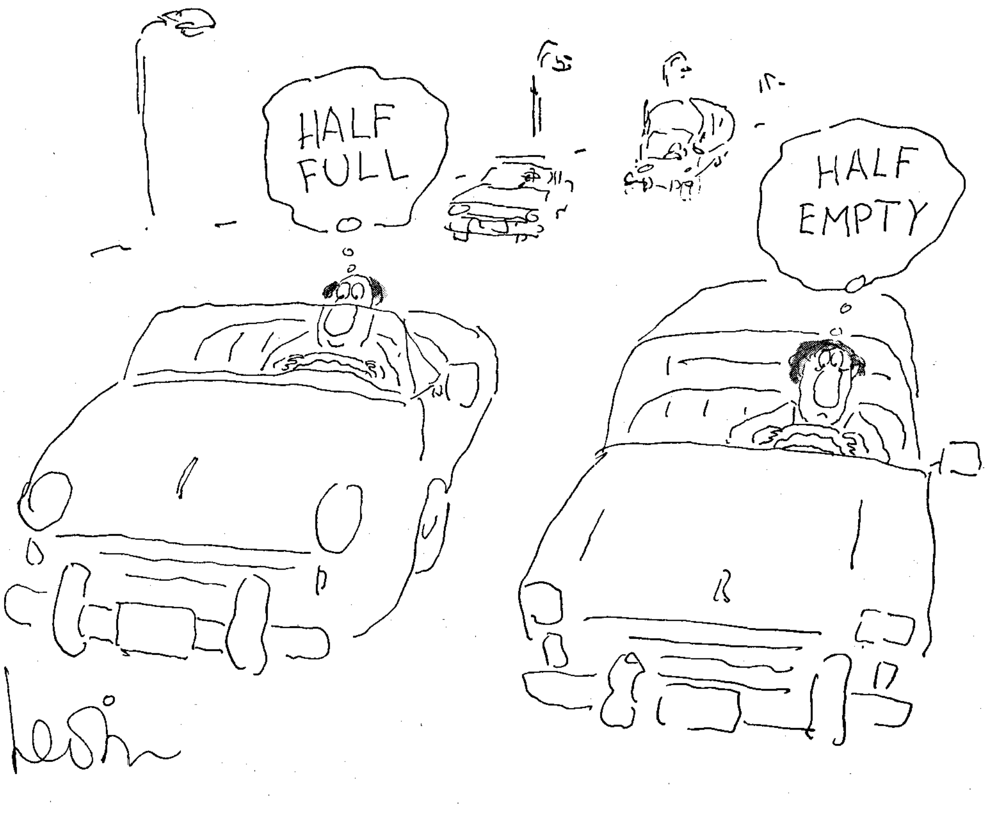
The Chinese women had gone through the tour making few comments but relentlessly taking notes, and now eight of the twelve sat with heads bowed over small pads as Ms. Salvage spoke. (In modern China, where the approach to life is solemnly utilitarian, it often appears to be a matter of simple good manners to take notes when someone is telling you something.) The group was addressed next by Mrs. Lucy Jarvis, a director of the bank who in 1972 had produced a film for television on the Forbidden City, in Peking. Mrs. Jarvis wore a dark-blue suit with gold buttons and a matching blue straw hat with a brilliant-red rose in the crown, and after welcoming her guests she removed her suit jacket with a regal gesture, revealing an attractive silk blouse. "I bought this at the Friendship Store in Peking," she announced, adding, with a note of triumph, "And it was tailored by Mr. Li." The Chinese women looked up from their notepads and made appropriate "ah"s of recognition.

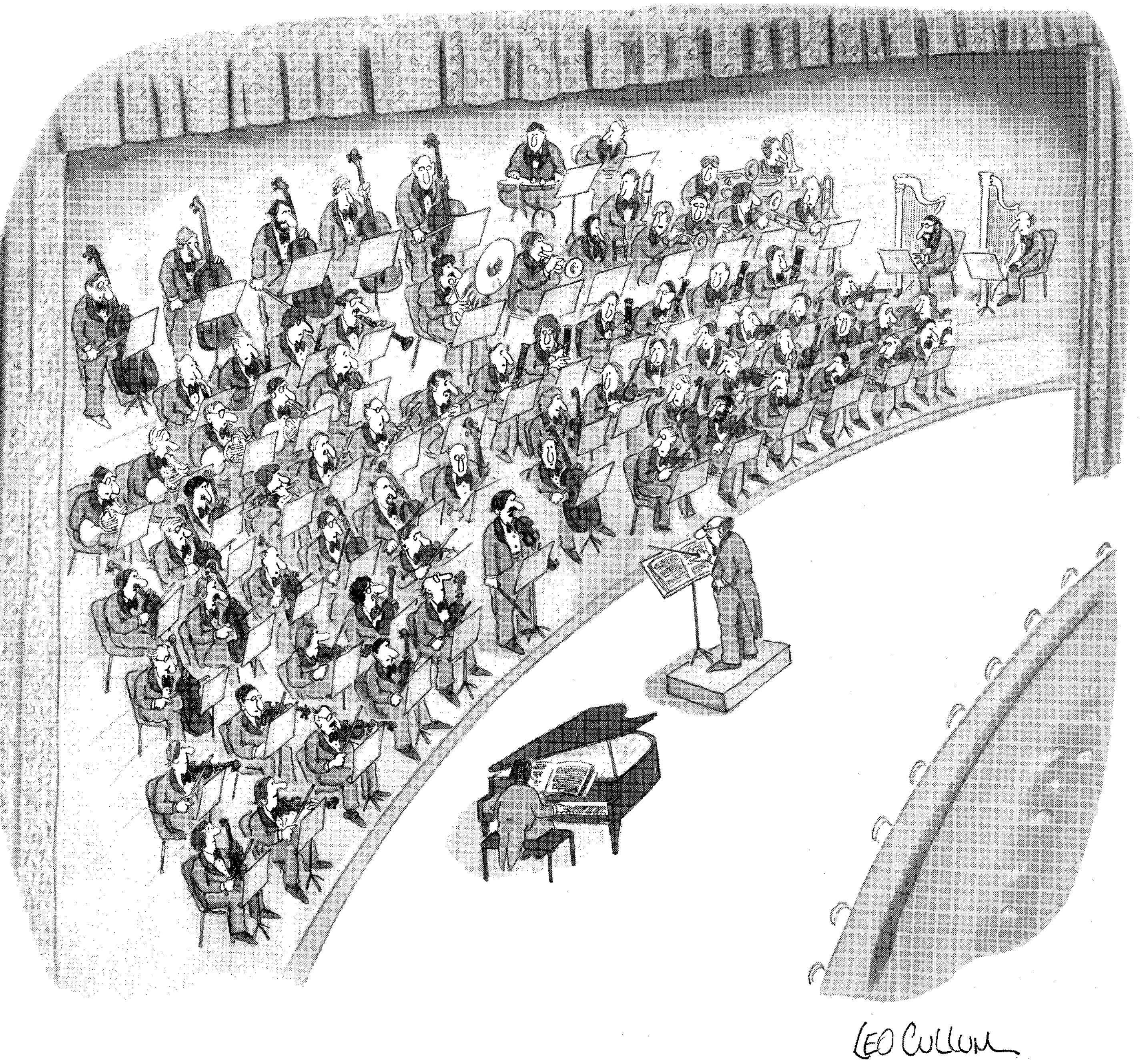
After the tour, we joined Ms. Wang, of the *People's Daily*, in the delegation's chartered bus and—with the help of Ms. Karen Steffen, who was assisting the host committee as an interpreter—asked her to tell us something about her life as a reporter in China.

Ms. Wang, who was wearing a pale-gray suit and a white blouse with a single zigzagging thread of gold in the collar, had an air of gentleness and competence. "I was born in Jiangsu Province," she told us. "My parents were farmers, and I was the eldest of three sisters. I attended Qing Hua University, in Peking, where I worked for the student newspaper and joined the student movement against the regime of Chiang Kai-shek. After the liberation of our country, I joined the *People's Daily*, where I have worked as a reporter for the last thirty years. In the nineteen-fifties, I cut out all the columns of Walter Lippmann and studied them. I also studied the writings of progressive American writers such as Anna Louise Strong and Edgar Snow."

We asked if she would give us her impressions of the American press.

Ms. Wang reflected for a moment. Then she answered, "There is a great difference from the press in China. In the United States, the newspapers are all privately owned, so we are impressed by the variety and richness of the content. But it is impossible to avoid noticing that they serve individual interests, and also the interests of big, big capitalist groups. So we know that American publications are free but also that they serve the interests of those who own them. In China, we are, of course, a Socialist people, so the purpose





"Before we continue, Maestro, could we discuss the motivation of the string section in this movement?"

• •

of our press is to serve the greatest number of the people: those in agriculture, those in industry, and the intelligentsia—all the patriotic people of China."

We observed to Ms. Wang that between the period of the Cultural Revolution, in the nineteen-sixties, and the present there appeared to have been sharp changes in the policies of the Chinese government, and asked for her comment.

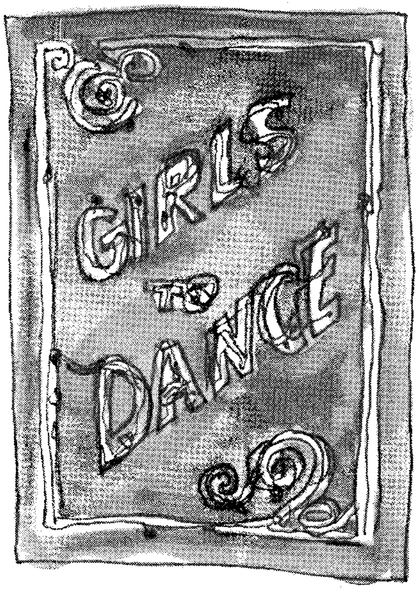
Ms. Wang paused to reflect again, and then fairly burst out with "Of *course* there have been changes—big changes!" And she went on, "The Gang of Four did great harm to our government, to our economy, and to our culture. We were ruined in many respects by them, and now we feel extremely relieved to be rid of them. Now the economy is again developing well; education is becoming splendid; we are able to have a normal political life; we feel safe. Today, we are all working for the Four Modernizations—of agriculture, of technology, of science, of defense. The Gang of Four were a negative, feudal influence, so we had to get rid of them."

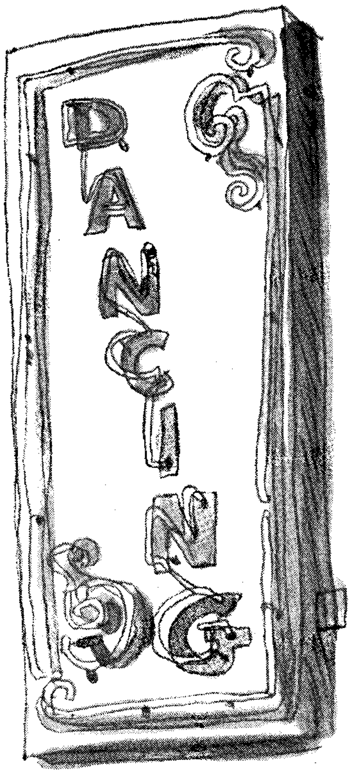
We asked whether her own life had been affected by the changes in governmental policy.

"Of course!" she exclaimed again. "The *People's Daily*, too, was ruined to a great extent by the Gang of Four. The propaganda of that time represented only the Gang of Four, and not the people. During that period, I refused to write for the paper. I became 'not in the best of health,' and entered a hospital on sick leave. Many people used this technique. Our hospitals filled up. Only half the patients had a physical condition; the other half had a 'mental condition.' When the Gang of Four were ousted, the hospitals emptied. I'm sure you are aware that in the history of mankind there are many twists and turns. The period of the Gang of Four was a very twisted one, but now our people are striving with one heart for the Four Modernizations.”

Ghost

AMONG the last remnants of ancient Broadway razzmatazz are the neon signs and lettered windows of the Tango Palace, on the second floor of a four-story building on the west side of Broadway at Forty-eighth Street. They must be forty years old, at least. There isn't much neon left in the Times Square area—it has been replaced by signs illuminated from within—but the Tango Palace still displays elegant spaghetti curls of the old style, and also white letters on black glass windows, which surely spelled sophisticated hot times to visiting firemen and undergraduates of the thirties. It's doubtful whether anybody tangos at the Tango Palace now—if anybody ever did—but the Palace is a stylish ghost, and we always look up with pleasure at its dingy dignity.





Country Lawyer

GERRY SPENCE, the Wyoming lawyer who, as chief trial attorney for the family of the late Karen Silkwood, recently obtained a whopping judgment of ten and a half million dollars from the Kerr-McGee Corporation, where she had been employed as a lab technician, was in town for a few days and, at the time we visited him, was pacing around in a room in the St. Moritz, which seemed too small for his ample frame—he stands six feet two—and was made to seem even smaller by the fact that he was swinging a tennis racquet in a studious, if eccentric, fashion. “I bought this racquet in Jackson Hole, Wyoming, where I practice law,” he said between swings. “I figured I might get a chance to take a few lessons in Oklahoma City, where the trial was held, but in eleven weeks I got on the tennis court only once, and what can you learn in one lesson, right?” He made an interesting backhand flourish and laid the racquet down on top of a large cardboard carton near the bed.

We asked Spence, who is fifty years old and was born in Laramie, Wyoming, if he had come into the Silkwood case, which had been a cause célèbre among anti-nuclear activists for several years, because of any anti-nuclear sympathies of his own.

“Hell, no,” he said. “I'm a country lawyer. I don't go in for any of these movement things. Actually, I'm a competent, credible personal-injury attorney, and the way I got into the case was that one of my ranch hands was a friend of a friend of Danny Sheehan, who's the lawyer who originally filed the case, and who was looking for somebody to try it. I remember that when I first went to talk with Sheehan there wasn't enough money even to take depositions from key witnesses, like old Dean McGee, the chairman of Kerr-McGee. So I used some of my own money and we took some depositions, and I began to see that there were some unusually important issues involved.”

Spence was now sprawled on the bed—which was looking a trifle frail—with his feet, in Western boots, hanging over the edge. “Let me tell you, the key issue was the issue of off-site contamination,” he went on. “You see, a worker who is injured or contaminated on-site is usually covered by workmen's compensation and thus can't sue the employer. A lot of people don't seem to know that. What it means is that if a worker is hurt on the job—on-site—all that that person can get is the limited compensation the law provides, which is generally enough to keep him or her from starving, and not much more. So Silkwood was the first off-site-contamination suit in the nuclear industry—at least, it's the first that has been brought to judgment—and it seems to me the ramifications are bound to be pretty interesting. For instance, as they might relate to the Three Mile Island situation.”

We asked Spence if he thought that the Three Mile Island disaster had affected the jury's verdict on Silkwood.

“No, I don't think so,” he said. “We had a good, serious six-person jury, which was instructed not to look at related material during the trial, and I don't think anybody did. The jurors were careful about what they watched on TV, and, in fact, a few of them told me that their wives or husbands used to clip out related material from the morning newspaper before handing it to them, so I don't know if they even knew about Three Mile Island. I'd say there were really two significant factors in the trial. Perhaps the basic one was the fact that the Kerr-McGee Corporation, one of the two hundred largest corporations in the country, with billions of dollars in assets, and private investigators, and five years to investigate this case, couldn't come up with a more honorable or intelligent defense than trying to smear the name of a dead woman, Karen Silkwood, first by suggesting that she contaminated herself and then by trying to introduce all kinds of evidence regarding her life style and personal habits—evidence that Judge Frank Theis wouldn't even allow admitted to the record. It was just damned silly and arrogant. I mean to tell you, Kerr-McGee's entire defense was to state that Karen had contaminated herself by doctoring her urine kit in order to embarrass the company, and that the company had abided properly by government safety regulations. But why on earth would she have done something like that when she was on her way to a New York *Times* reporter with much more important information, to the effect that the company had doctored scores of photomicrographs dealing with the welds on the fuel rods it was shipping to the

"Let's watch NBC, for Fred Silverman's sake, the poor dear."

breeder reactor at Hanford, Washington, and also that forty pounds of plutonium was missing from the plant! You know, to this day the defense has never been able to satisfactorily explain that missing plutonium. At first, they said it must have been caught in the pipes. But it turned out that the company had already flushed the pipes with acid for six weeks, and the guy in charge of the flushing project himself testified that they hadn't found any plutonium in there. It seems to me that this kind of loss is probably worth explaining, because one pound of plutonium, evenly distributed, would be enough to contaminate just about every man, woman, and child in the country. That's one thing that came out of this trial which I find very unsettling—the sheer imperfection of our plutonium technology. We just don't have the technology right now to *contain* plutonium. For example, both Kerr-McGee and the government admitted that at present they have no way of preventing a worker from walking out of a plant with a half gram of plutonium, which is enough plutonium to contaminate millions."

We asked Spence what the second significant factor in the trial had been.

"It was the broader interpretation of physical injury from contamination which was permitted by Judge Theis," he said. "You see, the principal claim of the Silkwood lawsuit was for nine days of mental pain and suffering, resulting from Karen's plutonium contamination. But you can't recover for mental pain and suffering unless you can show that it arises from physical injury; otherwise, everybody who had been scared by nearly being run over by a bus would sue the bus company. So the problem hanging over contamination-damage suits has been how to prove physical injury when the injury, as in this instance, was originally to the 'library' of one of the body's cells, which may not result in observable cancer until twenty years later, and whose process of germination is usually unfelt and unseen. We were greatly helped by experts such as Dr. John Gofman, one of the men who isolated the first milligram of plutonium. He testified that Karen Silkwood was 'married to lung cancer' from the moment she was contaminated. And then I believe that Judge Theis took a most necessary and humane step in the right direction when he instructed the jury that injury could mean something that exists even when it *can't* be seen or felt. Of course, a problem remains for others, in that we were able to show the contamination in Silkwood—since she was dead—from seventy samples taken from her lungs and elsewhere in her body. But perhaps medical detection of contamination in the living will keep pace with the industry."

We asked if Spence was returning to Wyoming with as dispassionate a view of nuclear power as he had held before he took on the Silkwood case.

"I never said I was dispassionate," he said, rising from the bed and eying the tennis racquet with a baleful glare. "I just wanted to win that goddam case, and I didn't think I could win it by wearing an anti-nuclear T-shirt. But the other day one of the anti-nuke people came up to me and congratulated me for putting a nail in the coffin of the nuclear-power industry, and I'm not sure I see it like that, either. It seems to me the real significance of Silkwood is that an American jury, composed of ordinary people, decided whether or not government standards in a hazardous industry were meaningful and safe. I think the Silkwood decision means that people can still make humane decisions about the regulation of technology affecting their own lives and about the need for truth. You might even call it a pro-technology decision, because over the long run you can't divorce technology from truth and have it benefit mankind. I think the Silkwood case told government and industry, first, to start telling the truth, and, second, that they'd be punished for covering it up." Spence picked up the tennis racquet and then put it down on the coffee table. A rather elegant brown leather Western jacket was draped over a chair arm. Spence removed the jacket from the arm and hung it carefully over the back of the chair.

We asked him if he was going to be in the city for a while.

"I've got to fly back tonight," he said. "They just killed the key witness in a murder case my partner has been working on in Evanston, Wyoming, and my partner is getting nervous. I won't even get to the ranch until maybe the weekend—which is probably just as well, since I only worry at the ranch. Twenty-five per cent of my calves died last winter—can you believe it? But it was forty-five below outside, so I guess I'm lucky I've still got anything around that moves."

THE BURNING HOUSE

Freddy Fox is in the kitchen with me. He has just washed and dried an avocado seed I don’t want, and he is leaning against the wall, rolling a joint. In five minutes, I will not be able to count on him. However: he started late in the day, and he has already brought in wood for the fire, gone to the store down the road for matches, and set the table. “You mean you’d know this stuff was Limoges even if you didn’t turn the plate over?” he called from the dining room. He pretended to be about to throw one of the plates into the kitchen, like a Frisbee. Sam, the dog, believed him and shot up, kicking the rug out behind him and skidding forward before he realized his error; it was like the Road Runner tricking Wile E. Coyote into going over the cliff for the millionth time. His jowls sank in disappointment.

“I see there’s a full moon,” Freddy says. “There’s just nothing that can hold a candle to nature. The moon and the stars, the tides and the sunshine—and we just don’t stop for long enough to wonder at it all. We’re so engrossed in ourselves.” He takes a very long drag on the joint. “We stand and stir the sauce in the pot instead of going to the window and gazing at the moon.”

“You don’t mean anything personal by that, I assume.”

“I love the way you pour cream in a pan. I like to come up behind you and watch the sauce bubble.”

“No, thank you,” I say. “You’re starting late in the day.”

“My responsibilities have ended. You don’t trust me to help with the cooking, and I’ve already brought in firewood and run an errand, and this very morning I exhausted myself by taking Mr. Sam jogging with me, down at Putnam Park. You’re sure you won’t?”

“No, thanks,” I say. “Not now, anyway.”

“I love it when you stand over the steam coming out of a pan and the hairs around your forehead curl into damp little curls.”

My husband, Frank Wayne, is Freddy’s half brother. Frank is an accountant. Freddy is closer to me than to Frank. Since Frank talks to Freddy more than he talks to me, however, and since Freddy is totally loyal, Freddy always knows more than I know. It pleases me that he does not know how to stir sauce; he will start talking, his mind will drift, and when next you look the sauce will be lumpy, or boiling away.

Freddy’s criticism of Frank is only implied. “What a gracious gesture to entertain his friends on the weekend,” he says.

“Male friends,” I say.

“I didn’t mean that you’re the sort of lady who doesn’t draw the line. I most certainly did not mean that,” Freddy says. “I would even have been surprised if you had taken a toke of this deadly stuff while you were at the stove.”

“O.K.,” I say, and take the joint from him. Half of it is left when I take it. Half an inch is left after I’ve taken two drags and given it back.

“More surprised still if you’d shaken the ashes into the saucepan.”

“You’d tell people I’d done it when they’d finished eating, and I’d be embarrassed. You can do it, though. I wouldn’t be embarrassed if it was a story you told on yourself.”

“You really understand me,” Freddy says. “It’s moon-madness, but I have to shake just this little bit in the sauce. I have to do it.”

He does it.

Frank and Tucker are in the living room. Just a few minutes ago, Frank returned from getting Tucker at the train. Tucker loves to visit. To him, Fairfield County is as mysterious as Alaska. He brought with him from New York a crock of mustard, a jeroboam of champagne, cocktail napkins with a picture of a plane flying over a building on them, twenty egret feathers (“You cannot get them anymore—strictly illegal,” Tucker whispered to me), and, under his black cowboy hat with the rhinestone-studded chin strap, a toy frog that hopped when wound. Tucker owns a gallery in SoHo, and Frank keeps his books. Tucker is now stretched out in the living room, visiting with Frank, and Freddy and I are both listening.

“. . . so everything I’ve been told indicates that he lives a purely Jekyll-and-Hyde existence. He’s twenty years old, and I can see that since he’s still living at home he might not want to flaunt his gayness. When he came into the gallery, he had his hair slicked back—just with water; I got close enough to sniff—and his mother was all but holding his hand. So fresh-scrubbed. The stories I’d heard. Anyway, when I called, his father started looking for the number where he could be reached on the Vineyard—very irritated, because I didn’t know James, and if I’d just phoned James I could have found him in a flash. He’s talking to himself, looking for the number, and I say, ‘Oh, did he go to visit friends or—’ and his father interrupts and says, ‘He was going to a gay pig roast. He’s been gone since Monday.’ *Just like that.*”

Freddy helps me carry the food out to the table. When we are all at the table, I mention the young artist Tucker was talking about. “Frank says his paintings are really incredible,” I say to Tucker.

“Makes Estes look like an Abstract Expressionist,” Tucker says. “I want that boy. I really want that boy.”

“You’ll get him,” Frank says. “You get everybody you go after.”

Tucker cuts a small piece of meat. He cuts it small so that he can talk while chewing. “Do I?” he says.

Freddy is smoking at the table, gazing dazedly at the moon centered in the window. “After dinner,” he says, putting the back of his hand against his forehead when he sees that I am looking at him, “we must all go to the lighthouse.”

“If only *you* painted,” Tucker says. “I’d want you.”

“You couldn’t have me,” Freddy snaps. He reconsiders. “That sounded halfhearted, didn’t it? Anybody who wants me can have me. This is the only place I can be on Saturday night where somebody isn’t hustling me.”

“Wear looser pants,” Frank says to Freddy.

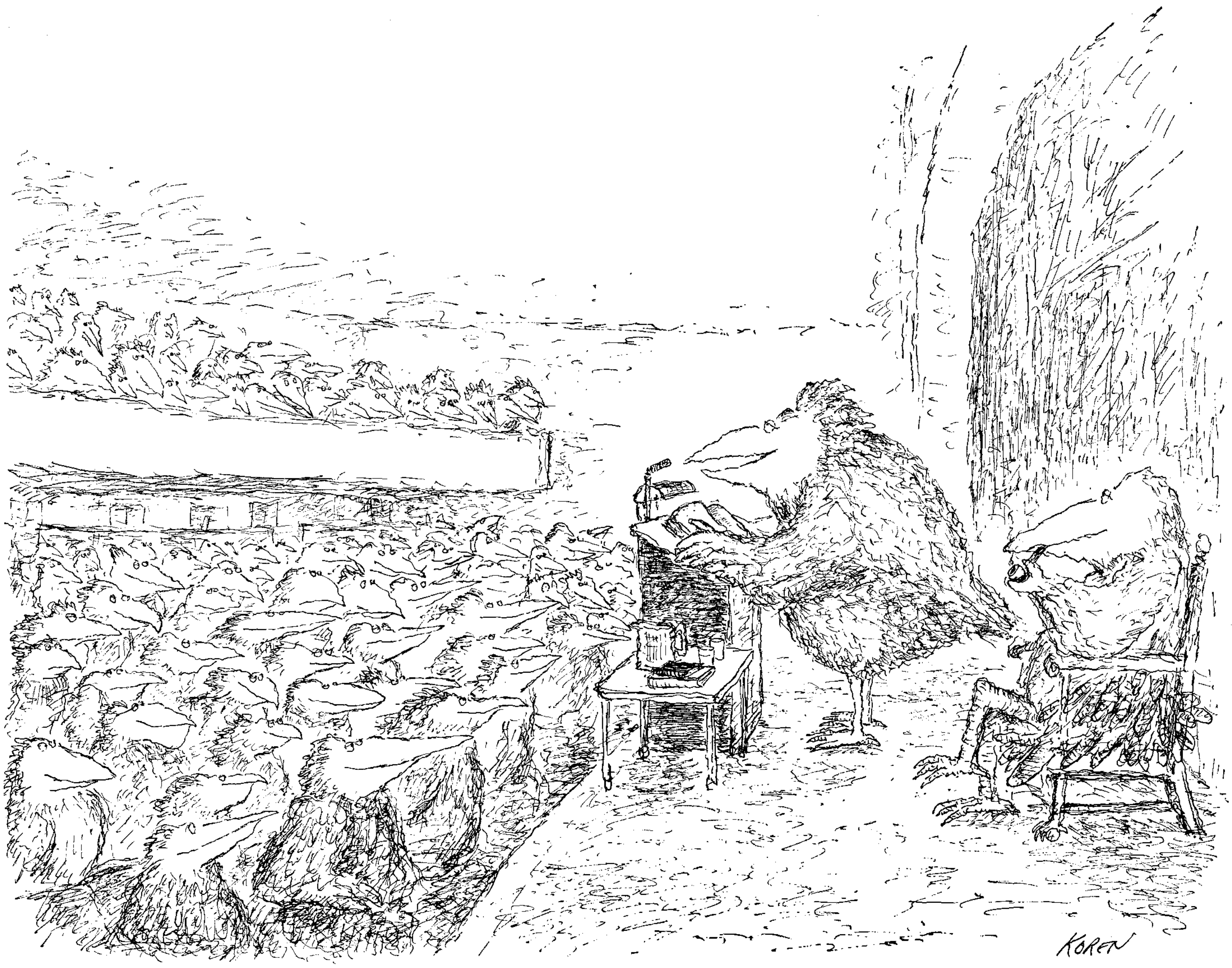
“This is so much better than some bar that stinks of cigarette smoke and leather. Why do I do it?” Freddy says. “Seriously—do you think I’ll ever stop?”

“Let’s not be serious,” Tucker says.

“I keep thinking of this table as a big boat, with dishes and glasses rocking on it,” Freddy says.

He takes the bone from his plate and walks out to the kitchen, dripping sauce on the floor. He walks as though he’s on the deck of a wave-tossed ship. “Mr. Sam!” he calls, and the dog springs up from the living-room floor, where he had been sleeping; his toenails on the bare wood floor sound like a wheel spinning in gravel. “You don’t have to beg,” Freddy says. “Jesus, Sammy—I’m just giving it to you.”

“I hope there’s a bone involved,”



“The night woods
Listen attentively
To the owl’s
discourse,
While at dawn
The grosbeak
Elaborates the lightening sky
With musical significance.”

• •

Tucker says, rolling his eyes to Frank. He cuts another tiny piece of meat. “I hope your brother does understand why I couldn’t keep him on. He was good at what he did, but he also might say just *anything* to a customer. You have to believe me that if I hadn’t been extremely embarrassed more than once I never would have let him go.”

“He should have finished school,” Frank says, sopping up sauce on his bread. “He’ll knock around a while longer, then get tired of it and settle down to something.”

“You think I died out here?” Freddy calls. “You think I can’t hear you?”

“I’m not saying anything I wouldn’t say to your face,” Frank says.

“I’ll tell you what I wouldn’t say to your face,” Freddy says. “You’ve got a swell wife and kid and dog, and you’re a snob, and you take it all for granted.”

Frank puts down his fork, completely exasperated. He looks at me.

“He came to work once this stoned,” Tucker says. “*Comprenez-vous?*”

“YOU like me because you feel sorry for me,” Freddy says.

He is sitting on the concrete bench outdoors, in the area that’s a garden in the springtime. It is early April now—not quite spring. It’s very foggy out. It rained while we were eating, and now it has turned mild. I’m leaning against a tree, across from him, glad it’s so dark and misty that I can’t look down and see the damage the mud is doing to my boots.

“Who’s his girlfriend?” Freddy says.

“If I told you her name, you’d tell him I told you.”

“Slow down. What?”

“I won’t tell you, because you’ll tell him that I know.”

“He knows you know.”

“I don’t think so.”

“How did you find out?”

“He talked about her. I kept hearing her name for months, and then we went to a party at Andy’s, and she was there, and when I said something about her later he said, ‘Natalie who?’ It was much too casual. It gave the whole thing away."

He sighs. "I just did something very optimistic," he says. "I came out here with Mr. Sam and he dug up a rock and I put the avocado seed in the hole and packed dirt on top of it. Don't say it—I know: can't grow outside, we'll still have another snow, even if it grew, the next year's frost would kill it."

"He's embarrassed," I say. "When he's home, he avoids me. But it's rotten to avoid Mark, too. Six years old, and he calls up his friend Neal to hint that he wants to go over there. He doesn't do that when we're here alone."

Freddy picks up a stick and pokes around in the mud with it. "I'll bet Tucker's after that painter personally, not because he's the hottest thing since pancakes. That expression of his—it's always the same. Maybe Nixon really loved his mother, but with that expression who could believe him? It's a curse to have a face that won't express what you mean."

"Amy!" Tucker calls. "Telephone."

Freddy waves goodbye to me with the muddy stick. " 'I am not a crook,' " Freddy says. "Jesus Christ."

Sam bounds halfway toward the house with me, then turns and goes back to Freddy.

It's Marilyn, Neal's mother, on the phone.

"Hi," Marilyn says. "He's afraid to spend the night."

"Oh, no," I say. "He said he wouldn't be."

She lowers her voice. "We can try it out, but I think he'll start crying."

"I'll come get him."

"I can bring him home. You're having a dinner party, aren't you?"

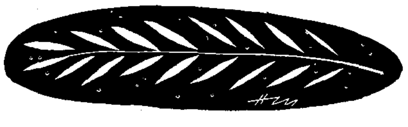
I lower my voice. "Some party. Tucker's here. J.D. never showed up."

"Well," she says. "I'm sure that what you cooked was good."

"It's so foggy out, Marilyn. I'll come get Mark."

"He can stay. I'll be a martyr," she says, and hangs up before I can object.

Freddy comes into the house, tracking in mud. Sam lies in the kitchen, waiting for his paws to be cleaned. "Come on," Freddy says, hitting his hand against his thigh, having no idea what Sam is doing. Sam gets up and runs after him. They go into the small downstairs bathroom together. Sam loves to watch people urinate. Sometimes he sings, to harmonize with the sound of the urine going into the water. There are footprints and pawprints everywhere. Tucker is shrieking with laughter in the living room. ". . . he says, he says to the other one, 'Then, dearie, have you ever played *spin* the bottle?' " Frank's and Tucker's laughter drowns out the sound of Freddy peeing in the bathroom. I turn on the water in the kitchen sink, and it drowns out all the noise. I begin to scrape the dishes. Tucker is telling another story when I turn off the water: ". . . that it was Onassis in the Anvil, and nothing would talk him out of it. They told him Onassis was dead, and he thought they were trying to make him think he was crazy. There was nothing to do but go along with him, but, God—he was trying to goad this poor old fag into fighting about Stavros Niarchos. You know—Onassis's *enemy*. He thought it was *Onassis*. In the *Anvil*." There is a sound of a glass breaking. Frank or Tucker puts "John Coltrane Live in Seattle" on the stereo and turns the volume down low. The bathroom door opens. Sam runs into the kitchen and begins to lap water from his dish. Freddy takes his little silver case and his rolling papers out of his shirt pocket. He puts a piece of paper on the kitchen table and is about to sprinkle grass on it, but realizes just in time that the paper has absorbed water from a puddle. He balls it up with his thumb, flicks it to the floor, puts a piece of rolling paper where the table's dry and shakes a line of grass down it. "You smoke this," he says to me. "I'll do the dishes."



"We'll both smoke it. I'll wash and you can wipe."

"I forgot to tell them I put ashes in the sauce," he says.

"I wouldn't interrupt."

"At least he pays Frank ten times what any other accountant for an art gallery would make," Freddy says.

Tucker is beating his hand on the arm of the sofa as he talks, stomping his feet. ". . . so he's trying to feel him out, to see if this old guy with the dyed hair knew *Maria Callas*. Jesus! And he's so out of it he's trying to think what opera singers are called, and instead of coming up with '*diva*' he comes up with '*duenna*.' At this point, Larry Betwell went up to him and tried to calm him down, and he breaks into song—some aria or something that Maria Callas was famous for. Larry told him he was going to lose his *teeth* if he didn't get it together, and . . ."

"He spends a lot of time in gay hangouts, for not being gay," Freddy says.

I scream and jump back from the sink, hitting the glass I'm rinsing against the faucet, shattering green glass everywhere.

"What?" Freddy says. "Jesus Christ, what is it?"

Too late, I realize what it must have been that I saw: J.D. in a goat

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RETURN, STARTING OUT

There it is, the jagged sprawl of the familiar
landscape gripping the bay, urging itself
forward into the warming water of the Straits
and the lean winter fish that are picking up speed.

How much the same it is! Only I turned slightly, just now,
against it—this familiar. I touch it now and everything
is slightly less known and unknown—myself
and others, houses the same color, repainted, or not here.

Now if I reach out into the air there is no sadness
in the empty space I receive, no sadness in the wood
of the oars when I take a rented boat into the bay
and let it drift, not driven but enchanted by current and wind.

Sitting in this boat, I look back at the rooms of houses.
What irritable knots of light they seem from here in half-light,
what irresistible nests of only a little warmth, smells
of whatever meats are over the braziers.

I am not fishing in this boat, it is becalmed.
I am not thinking deeply out here, no meditation.
I am floating, moving where the wood of the boat
moves, merely floating, looking back.

—DANIEL HALPERN

• •

mask, the puckered pink plastic lips against the window beside the kitchen sink.

"I'm sorry," J.D. says, coming through the door and nearly colliding with Frank, who has rushed into the kitchen. Tucker is right behind him.

"Ooh," Tucker says, feigning disappointment, "I thought Freddy smooched her."

"I'm sorry," J.D. says again. "I thought you'd know it was me."

The rain must have started again, because J.D. is soaking wet. He has turned the mask around so that the goat's head stares out from the back of his head. "I got lost," J.D. says. He has a farmhouse upstate. "I missed the turn. I went miles. I missed the whole dinner, didn't I?"

"What did you do wrong?" Frank asks.

"I didn't turn left onto 58. I don't know why I didn't realize my mistake, but I went *miles*. It was raining so hard I couldn't go over twenty-five miles an hour. Your driveway is all mud. You're going to have to push me out."

"There's some roast left over. And salad, if you want it," I say.

"Bring it in the living room," Frank says to J.D. Freddy is holding out a plate to him. J.D. reaches for the plate. Freddy pulls it back. J.D. reaches again, and Freddy is so stoned that he isn't quick enough this time—J.D. grabs it.

"I thought you'd know it was me," J.D. says. "I apologize." He dishes salad onto the plate. "You'll be rid of me for six months, in the morning."

"Where does your plane leave from?" Freddy says.

"Kennedy."

"Come in here!" Tucker calls. "I've got a story for you about Perry Dwyer down at the Anvil last week, when he thought he saw Aristotle Onassis."

"Who's Perry Dwyer?" J.D. says.

"That is not the point of the story, dear man. And when you're in Cassis, I want you to look up an American painter over there. Will you? He doesn't have a phone. Anyway—I've been tracking him, and I know where he is now, and I am *very* interested, if you would stress that with him, to do a show in June that will be *only* him. He doesn't answer my letters."

"Your hand is cut," J.D. says to me.

"Forget it," I say. "Go ahead."

"I'm sorry," he says. "Did I make you do that?"

"Yes, you did."

"Don't keep your finger under the water. Put pressure on it to stop the bleeding."

He puts the plate on the table. Freddy is leaning against the counter, staring at the blood swirling in the sink, and smoking the joint all by himself. I can feel the little curls on my forehead that Freddy was talking about. They feel heavy on my skin. I hate to see my own blood. I'm sweating. I let J.D. do what he does; he turns off the water and wraps his hand around my second finger, squeezing. Water runs down our wrists.

Freddy jumps to answer the phone when it rings, as though a siren just went off behind him. He calls me to the phone, but J.D. steps in front of me, shakes his head no, and takes the dish towel and wraps it around my hand before he lets me go.

"Well," Marilyn says. "I had the best of intentions, but my battery's dead."

J.D. is standing behind me, with his hand on my shoulder.

"I'll be right over," I say. "He's not upset now, is he?"

"No, but he's dropped enough hints that he doesn't think he can make it through the night."

"O.K.," I say. "I'm sorry about all of this."

"Six years old," Marilyn says. "Wait till he grows up and gets that feeling."

I hang up.

"Let me see your hand," J.D. says.

"I don't want to look at it. Just go get me a Band-Aid, please."

He turns and goes upstairs. I unwrap the towel and look at it. It's pretty deep, but no glass is in my finger. I feel funny; the outlines of things are turning yellow. I sit in the chair by the phone. Sam comes and lies beside me, and I stare at his black-and-yellow tail, beating. I reach down with my good hand and pat him, breathing deeply in time with every second pat.

"*Rothko?*" Tucker says bitterly, in the living room. "Nothing is great that can appear on greeting cards. Wyeth is that way. Would 'Christina's World' look bad on a cocktail napkin? You know it wouldn't."

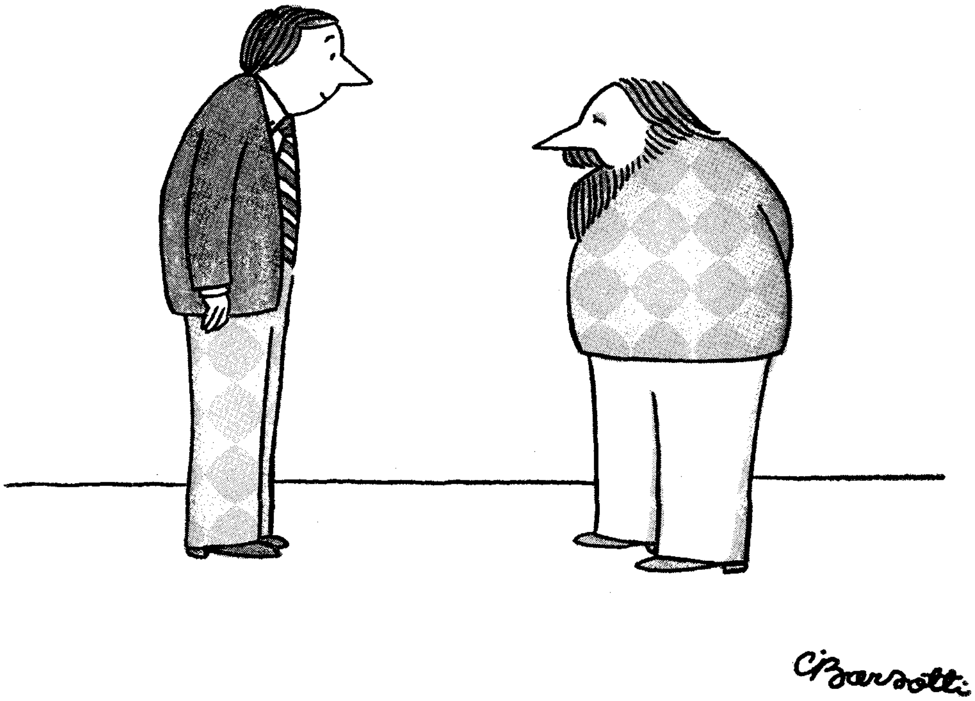
I jump as the phone rings again. "Hello?" I say, wedging the phone against my shoulder with my ear, wrapping the dish towel tighter around my hand.

"Tell them it's a crank call. Tell them anything," Johnny says. "I miss you. How's Saturday night at your house?"

"All right," I say. I catch my breath.

"Everything's all right here, too. Yes indeed. Roast rack of lamb. Friend of Nicole's who's going to Key West tomorrow had too much to drink and got depressed because he thought it was raining in Key West, and I said I'd go in my study and call the National Weather Service. Hello, Weather Service. How are you?"

J.D. comes down from upstairs with two Band-Aids and stands beside me, unwrapping one. I want to say to



"So you've come to see what makes the great man tick, eh—is that it?"

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Johnny, "I'm cut. I'm bleeding. It's no joke."

It's all right to talk in front of J.D., but I don't know who else might overhear me.

"I'd say they made the delivery about four this afternoon," I say.

"This is the church, this is the steeple. Open the door, and see all the people," Johnny says. "Take care of yourself. I'll hang up and find out if it's raining in Key West."

"Late in the afternoon," I say. "Everything is fine."

"Nothing is fine," Johnny says. "Take care of yourself."

He hangs up. I put the phone down, and realize that I'm still having trouble focussing, the sight of my cut finger made me so light-headed. I don't look at the finger again as J.D. undoes the towel and wraps the Band-Aids around my finger.

"What's going on in here?" Frank says, coming into the dining room.

"I cut my finger," I say. "It's O.K."

"You did?" he says. He looks woozy—a little drunk. "Who keeps calling?"

"Marilyn. Mark changed his mind about staying all night. She was going to bring him home, but her battery's dead. You'll have to get him. Or I will."

"Who called the second time?" he says.

"The oil company. They wanted to know if we got our delivery today."

He nods. "I'll go get him, if you want," he says. He lowers his voice. "Tucker's probably going to whirl himself into a tornado for an encore," he says, nodding toward the living room. "I'll take him with me."

"Do you want me to go get him?" J.D. says.

"I don't mind getting some air," Frank says. "Thanks, though. Why don't you go in the living room and eat your dinner?"

"You forgive me?" J.D. says.

"Sure," I say. "It wasn't your fault. Where did you get that mask?"

"I found it on top of a Goodwill box in Manchester. There was also a beautiful old birdcage—solid brass."

The phone rings again. I pick it up. "Wouldn't I love to be in Key West with you," Johnny says. He makes a sound as though he's kissing me and hangs up.

"Wrong number," I say.

Frank feels in his pants pocket for the car keys.

J. D. knows about Johnny. He introduced me, in the faculty lounge, where J.D. and I had gone to get a cup of coffee after I registered for classes. After being gone for nearly two years, J.D. still gets mail at the department—he said he had to stop by for the mail anyway, so he'd drive me to campus and point me toward the registrar's. J.D. taught English; now he does nothing. J.D. is glad that I've gone back to college to study art again, now that Mark is in school. I'm six credits away from an M.A. in art history. He wants me to think about myself, instead of thinking about Mark all the time. He talks as though I could roll Mark out on a string and let him fly off, high above me. J.D.'s wife and son died in a car crash. His son was Mark's age. "I wasn't prepared," J.D. said when we were driving over that day. He always says this when he talks about it. "How could you be prepared for such a thing?" I asked him. "I am now," he said. Then, realizing he was acting very hardboiled, made fun of himself. "Go on," he said, "punch me in the stomach. Hit me as hard as you can." We both knew he isn't prepared for anything. When he couldn't find a parking place that day, his hands were wrapped around the wheel so tightly that his knuckles turned white.

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

Johnny came in as we were drinking coffee. J.D. was looking at his junk mail—publishers wanting him to order anthologies, ways to get free dictionaries.

"You are so lucky to be out of it," Johnny said, by way of greeting. "What do you do when you've spent two weeks on 'Hamlet' and the student writes about Hamlet's good friend Horchow?"

He threw a blue book into J.D.'s lap. J.D. sailed it back.

"Johnny," he said, "this is Amy."

"Hi, Amy," Johnny said.

"You remember when Frank Wayne was in graduate school here? Amy's Frank's wife."

"Hi, Amy," Johnny said.

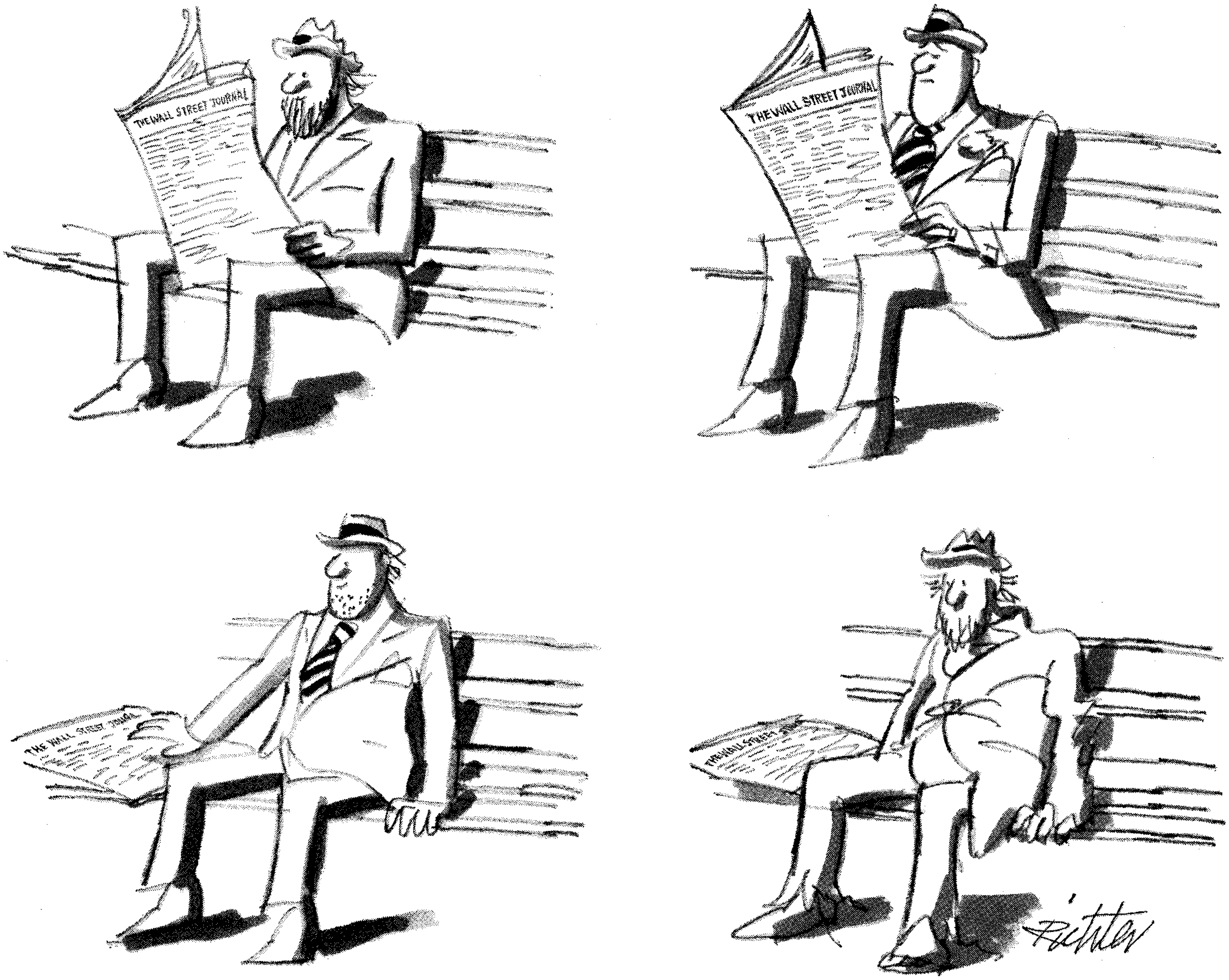
J.D. told me he knew it the instant Johnny walked into the room—he knew that second that he should introduce me as somebody's wife. He could have predicted it all from the way Johnny looked at me.

For a long time J.D. gloated that he had been prepared for what happened next—that Johnny and I were going to get together. It took me to disturb his pleasure in himself—me, crying hysterically on the phone last month, not knowing what to do, what move to make next.

"Don't do anything for a while. I guess that's my advice," J.D. said. "But you probably shouldn't listen to me. All I can do myself is run away, hide out. I'm not the learned professor. You know what I believe. I believe all that wicked fairy-tale crap: your heart will break, your house will burn."

Tonight, because he doesn't have a garage at his farm, J.D. has come to leave his car in the empty half of our two-car garage while he's in France. I look out the window and see his old Saab, glowing in the moonlight. J.D. has brought his favorite book, "A Vision," to read on the plane. He says his suitcase contains only a spare pair of jeans, cigarettes, and underwear. He is going to buy a leather jacket in France, at a store where he almost bought a leather jacket two years ago.

IN our bedroom there are about twenty small glass prisms hung with fishing line from one of the exposed beams; they catch the morning light, and we stare at them like a cat eying catnip held above its head. Just now, it is 2 A.M. At six-thirty, they will be filled with dazzling color. At four or five, Mark will come into the bedroom and get in bed with us. Sam will wake up, stretch, and shake, and the tags on his collar will clink, and he will yawn and shake again and go downstairs, where J.D. is asleep in his sleeping bag and Tucker is asleep on the sofa, and get a drink of water from his dish. Mark has been coming into our bedroom for about a year. He gets onto the bed by climbing up on a footstool that horrified me when I first saw it—a gift from Frank's mother: a footstool that says "Today Is the First Day of the Rest of Your Life" in nee-



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dlepoint. I kept it in a closet for years, but it occurred to me that it would help Mark get up onto the bed, so he would not have to make a little leap and possibly skin his shin again. Now Mark does not disturb us when he comes into the bedroom, except that it bothers me that he has reverted to sucking his thumb. Sometimes he lies in bed with his cold feet against my leg. Sometimes, small as he is, he snores.

Somebody is playing a record downstairs. It's the Velvet Underground—Nico, in a dream or swoon, singing "Sunday Morning." I can barely hear the whispering and tinkling of the record. I can only follow it because I've heard it a hundred times.

I am lying in bed, waiting for Frank to get out of the bathroom. My cut finger throbs. Things are going on in the house even though I have gone to bed; water runs, the record plays, Sam is still downstairs, so there must be some action.

I have known everybody in the house for years, and as time goes by I know them all less and less. J.D. was Frank's adviser in college. Frank was his best student, and they started to see each other outside of class. They played handball. J.D. and his family came to dinner. We went there. That summer—the summer Frank decided to go to graduate school in business instead of English—J.D.'s wife and son deserted him in a more horrible way, in that car crash. J.D. has quit his job. He has been to Las Vegas, to Colorado, New Orleans, Los Angeles, Paris twice; he tapes postcards to the walls of his living room. A lot of the time, on the weekends, he shows up at our house with his sleeping bag. Sometimes he brings a girl. Lately, not. Years ago, Tucker was in Frank's therapy group in New York, and ended up hiring Frank to work as the accountant for his gallery. Tucker was in therapy at the time because he was obsessed with foreigners. Now he is also obsessed with homosexuals. He gives fashionable parties to which he invites many foreigners and homosexuals. Before the parties he does TM and yoga, and during the parties he does Seconals and isometrics. When I first met him, he was living for the summer in his sister's house in Vermont while she was in Europe, and he called us one night, in New York, in a real panic because there were wasps all over. They were "hatching," he said—big, sleepy wasps that were everywhere. We said we'd come; we drove all through the night to get to Brattleboro. It was true: there were wasps on the undersides of plates, in the plants, in the folds of curtains. Tucker was so upset that he was out behind the house, in the cold Vermont morning, wrapped like an Indian in a blanket, with only his pajamas on underneath. He was sitting in a lawn chair, hiding behind a bush, waiting for us to come.

And Freddy—"Reddy Fox," when Frank is feeling affectionate toward him. When we first met, I taught him to ice-skate and he taught me to waltz; in the summer, at Atlantic City, he'd go with me on a roller coaster that curved high over the

"I had to struggle through life as a Capricorn, but I died under Gemini, so it's a whole new ballgame."

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waves. I was the one—not Frank—who would get out of bed in the middle of the night and meet him at an all-night deli and put my arm around his shoulders, the way he put his arm around my shoulders on the roller coaster, and talk quietly to him until he got over his latest anxiety attack. Now he tests me, and I retreat: this man he picked up, this man who picked him up, how it feels to have forgotten somebody's name when your hand is in the back pocket of his jeans and you're not even halfway to your apartment. Reddy Fox—admiring my new red silk blouse, stroking his fingertips down the front, and my eyes wide, because I could feel his fingers on my chest, even though I was holding the blouse in front of me on a hanger to be admired. All those moments, and all they meant was that I was fooled into thinking I knew these people because I knew the small things, the personal things.

Freddy will always be more stoned than I am, because he feels comfortable getting stoned with me and I'll always be reminded that he's more lost. Tucker knows he can come to the house and be the center of attention; he can tell all the stories he knows, and we'll never tell the story we know about him hiding in the bushes like a frightened dog. J.D. comes back from his trips with boxes full of postcards, and I look at all of them as though they're photographs taken by him, and I know, and he knows, that what he likes about them is their flatness—the unreality of them, the unreality of what he does.

Last summer, I read "The Metamorphosis" and said to J.D., "Why did Gregor Samsa wake up a cockroach?" His answer (which he would have toyed over with his students forever) was "Because that's what people expected of him."

They make the illogical logical. I don't do anything, because I'm waiting, I'm on hold (J.D.); I stay stoned because I know it's better to be out of it (Freddy); I love art because I myself am a work of art (Tucker).

Frank is harder to understand. One night a week or so ago, I thought we were really attuned to each other, communicating by telepathic waves, and as I lay in bed about to speak I realized that the vibrations really existed: they were him, snoring.

Now he's coming into the bedroom, and I'm trying again to think what to say. Or ask. Or do.

"Be glad you're not in Key West," he says. He climbs into bed.

I raise myself up on one elbow and stare at him.

"There's a hurricane about to hit," he says.

"What?" I say. "Where did you hear that?"

"When Reddy Fox and I were putting the dishes away. We had the radio on." He doubles up his pillow, pushes it under his neck. "Boom goes everything," he says. "Bam. Crash. Poof." He looks at me. "You look shocked." He closes his eyes. Then, after a minute or two, he murmurs, "Hurricanes upset you? I'll try to think of something nice."

He is quiet for so long that I think he has fallen asleep. Then he says, "Cars that run on water. A field of flowers, none alike. A shooting star that goes slow enough for you to watch. Your life to do over again."

He has been whispering in my ear, and when he takes his mouth away I shiver. He slides lower in the bed for sleep. "I'll tell you something really amazing," he says. "Tucker told me he went into a travel agency on Park Avenue last week and asked the travel agent where he should go to pan for gold, and she told him."

"Where did she tell him to go?"

"I think somewhere in Peru. The banks of some river in Peru."

"Did you decide what you're going to do after Mark's birthday?" I say.

He doesn't answer me. I touch him on the side, finally.

"It's two o'clock in the morning. Let's talk about it another time."

"You picked the house, Frank. They're your friends downstairs. I used to be what you wanted me to be."

"They're your friends, too," he says. "Don't be paranoid."

"I want to know if you're staying or going."

He takes a deep breath, lets it out, and continues to lie very still.

"Everything you've done is commendable," he says. "You did the right thing to go back to school. You tried to do the right thing by finding yourself a normal friend like Marilyn. But your whole life you've made one mistake—you've surrounded yourself with men. Let me tell you something. All men—if they're crazy, like Tucker, if they're gay as the Queen of the May, like Reddy Fox, even if they're just six years old—I'm going to tell you something about them. Men think they're Spider-Man and Buck Rogers and Superman. You know what we all feel inside that you don't feel? That we're going to the stars."

He takes my hand. "I'm looking down on all of this from space," he whispers. "I'm already gone."

—Ann Beattie

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Guaranteed full time work. Start immediately. We require 18 people. Must have a war.—*Adv. in the Montreal Gazette.*

What's your hurry?

WASPS' NESTS

Red roofs ahead invite Avery Deal forward. Wine lifts his step over small obstacles that don't exist in the road. The houses of Worton, which from a distance promised a knot of humanity, seem farther apart as he comes closer. Once in the village, he's reminded there's not a door where he's welcome along the whole row.

Sitting across from the Kearnses' house, Avery says his heart has gone to flutter again and he has blind spots before his eyes. He waves a hand in front of his face, trying to knock the spots away. Mrs. Presnell, watching from her corner store, thinks Granger might fire him this time. Avery gets health notions and then for a week he's useless in the hayfield.

Avery hasn't stopped at the Kearnses' since the shower for his wife, Aileen. It wasn't really a shower but a money tree on the kitchen table, with bills clipped to its metal branches with clothespins. Holly Kearns has said she feels sorry for Aileen, with a man like that—a man who didn't even have his own way around when he married her but they went everywhere in Aileen's car till it broke down and now they don't have transportation at all.

It had looked like a hundred dollars the way the bills were hanging all over the tree, but when Aileen got it all unclipped and took it outside for Avery to count it was only thirty-five. Thurman Deal, waiting in the road for a share, took ten dollars, claiming it was the aspirin money Avery owed him. After the argument, Holly Kearns asked Avery inside for cake, but the women were talking about eye color and hair, and one of them had a needle dangling over Aileen's wrist. Avery said he felt poorly and was leaving.

The needle pointed north and south, and Aileen came home saying it was going to be a girl this time. Avery doesn't want another girl. His youngest, Leon, gets headaches and noises in his head. In case Leon grows up sickly, he's hoping for another boy to take his place.

Avery thumps the ground with his feet, but the Kearnses pay no attention. It's the hippies—the new boy and girl who are redoing the house on the corner—who hurry out and offer him a ride. On the way to Clayton, the boy wants to know if Avery ever tried comfrey. The girl says he shouldn't trust doctors because they don't learn anything about nutrition in medical school. If they would just let him off in front of Drug Fair, that would be fine, Avery says. They want to wait for him, but he says no, he feels better. And if something happened to him, the man inside mixing medicine would know what to give him. At ten o'clock, when the store closes, Avery's on his own again.

A few days later, the hippies give Avery another ride. He says he believes it's the heart dropsy again, but he's paying most attention to his running nose, accumulations of phlegm in his throat, and the soggy bandanna in his fist. The girl, Nadine, says he shouldn't put his energy into his cold. Her man isn't talking this trip. Avery doubts they'll carry him to Clayton again. But when they find his last name is Deal the girl starts making connections. "You're related to Thurman Deal," she says.

"Some way," Avery admits. "His father and my grandfather was kin. What does that make us?"

"And you're Leon Deal's father."

Leon is in the pre-school where Nadine works in the kitchen, but he misses most days. The teachers think his headaches may be caused by eye strain, and Leon's two older sisters have told him he's got to go for medicine in his eyes. This past week the boy has been sick again with the noises in his head. At night, in bed, he calls his father down beside his ear so he can hear them, too.

Avery is gentle with his son. Aileen says it's him who's ruined the boy. "Is it like little bells, what you hear?" Avery asks him.

"No," Leon says, "It's like the dog whistle Mr. Granger give us. So high you almost can't hear it sometimes."

Avery says don't worry, he's had the same thing himself.

The pre-school has arranged transportation for Leon to the eye doctor, but when the county van comes the boy is hiding in the cornfield. While Aileen hunts for Leon, Avery circles the van, blinking. He's decided to make the excursion, too. He says his sight has been at quivers this week anyway—everything has been jumping double on him. But later, when he gets to the eye doctor, they want him to stand in line with children and read letters in his turn. Instead, he waits outside in the van for the trip back home.

Avery knows people say he likes to stand close to medicine more than to be treated by it. He remembers the time the Rowlands called the ambulance on him just because he was lying in the ditch with the heat fatigue. He jumped a stone wall as soon as he heard the siren. Later, the Rowlands boasted in the store of their quick cure for Mr.

Deal. His worst times are when he's certain something more serious is about to happen to him.

Aileen has said she's grateful her next will be a girl. She wouldn't want another boy imitating his father's troubles, another body full of disease. Inside his ringing head Leon is so secretive, and Aileen doesn't trust the time he spends alone. Once, standing in Granger's barn, she heard a thumping above her in the mow. Supposing it was her five-year-old, she climbed the ladder to catch him in some mischief and saw he was only rocking back and forth, repeating "wasps' nests" to himself.

Aileen was ashamed of herself and sad for her son. But Leon was giggling. He'd discovered if you repeated something enough times, and quickly, you could lose track of what it meant. It could become a noise, just nonsense.

SOMETIMES when Leon is sick in bed his father lets him look at the pictures of the bad men. When Avery was himself a boy, his cousin Thurman Deal's picture was in the post office. There was a whole year when they hadn't caught Thurman, and Avery would walk to town to see his cousin's face hanging with the other faces. He began to steal the handbills, kept them in a notebook and carried them to school, where they could be admired and traded. Avery still has them. With Thurman's face and fingers among them, the handbills are a family secret.

Avery has read the descriptions to Leon until the boy knows by heart three dozen ancient criminals, their scars and tattoos—men who stole enough to take interstate flights. Leon supposes the men were frequently on airplanes. The handbills become a teaching aid. As Avery's finger slides over robbery, mail fraud, abduction, embezzlement, Leon follows the sound and imagines the crime. Prompted by faces, his lips move with his father's.

"Do Otto and Frances," Leon will say, and Avery shuffles through the old F.B.I. sheets to the thin couple who travelled with a son they called Mouse Face or Foco. "They should be considered armed and dangerous," Leon says. But tonight he sits silent and does not betray his knowledge of the mark on Thurman Deal's thigh and his four extra names. Thurman's crime was robbing gas stations with a gun, followed by an ordinary interstate flight.

"That's enough," says Avery, who thinks the fever sore on his lip could be developing into something more serious. Besides, he is considering the picture of his cousin.

PAPEETE

When you walk
At night along Papeete harbor
The route of the traffic
Is strangely faint
And on the boulevard above the trees
The halos of the street lamps
Do not disturb the darkness of the leaves
And the spires of the yachts
That gently rise out of the deep water
Are still and white as the lights
Of the warehouses on the port
That dip and dissolve in the black sea

When you walk
At night along Papeete harbor
The flags appear
Softer than you've ever known
And the sky's ablaze in pendants of stars
That mist and hang through the tenebrous blue
And among the shadows on the yachts
You can make out the wet figures
Smoking or drinking or tossing dice
And each seems to beckon to you
And across the quay you can greet
Tanned and hardened the young runners
As they move swiftly down your path
Then stop and turn and wait for you
And lastly against the dragonflies
That slowly fleck the air you can seek
The faces of *vahines* in the park
Those women who'll lie
On benches in their French sailors' arms
And wonderingly gaze and smile at you
With eyes that might follow
Clear around the world and do

When you walk
At night along Papeete harbor
Though you'll tell yourself
You're much too old and you are
Though you'll say there's no adventure
Left it'll soon be dawn yet it's here
—Robert Mazzocco

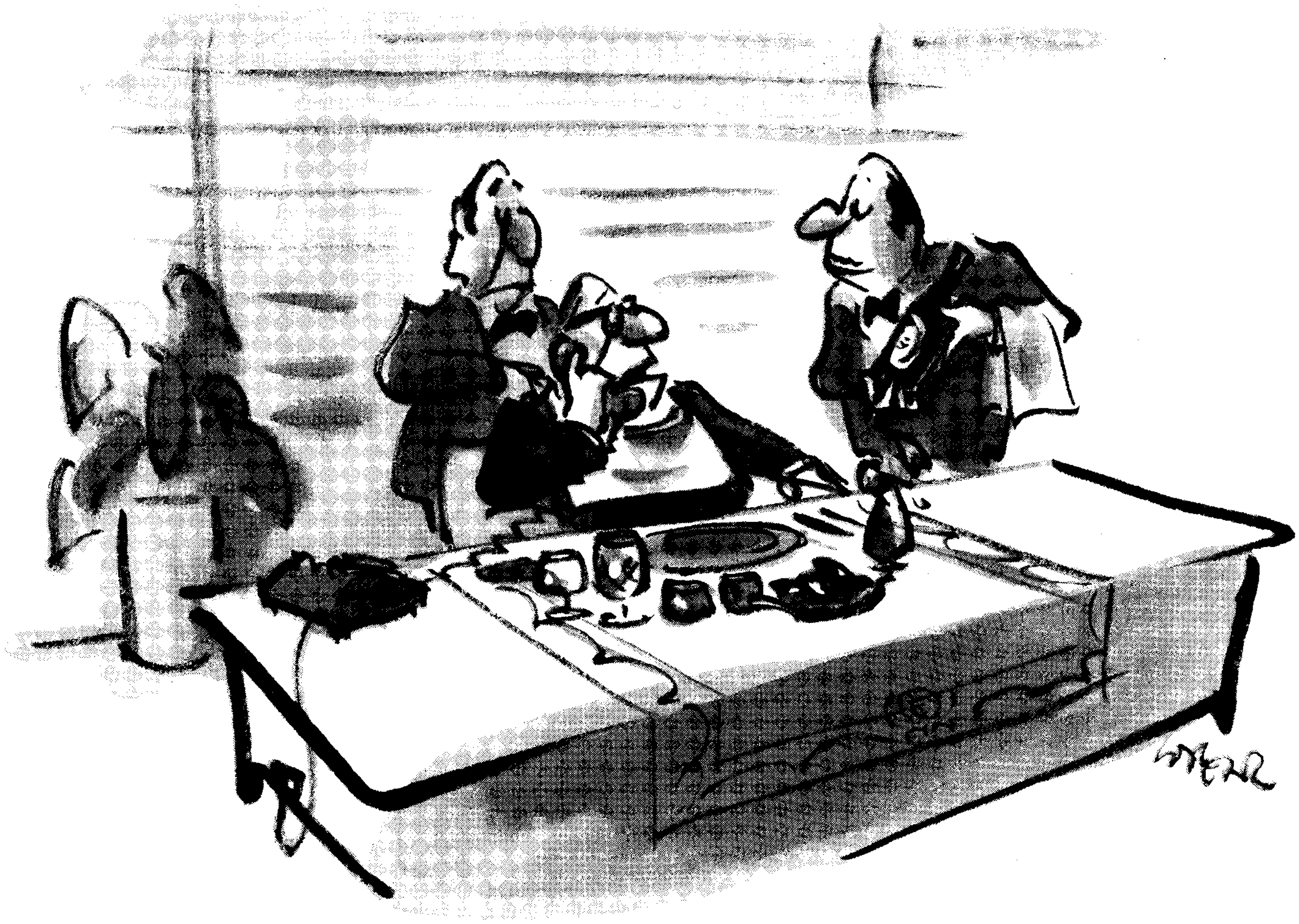
• •

Thurman Deal finished his time fifteen years ago and has worked on farms in northern Virginia ever since. He likes to follow Avery's family from one area to another—likes to be close to kin, he tells them. But in the store he does imitations of Avery and denies he's related. "Like this," he says, forefingers to temples, balancing a disease in his head.

Thurman, without a regular woman, uses Avery's family for his own, pinching Aileen in her kitchen, and telling the children how to behave. They don't like to see him coming. He'll turn the hose on Leon and the girls for fun and bully a dollar from their father. Avery, dizzy with the aspirin he's taken against joint fever, will stop Thurman in the yard and give up small change while the children disappear into the house and Thurman watches the unprotected doorway.

ONE afternoon, the hippie girl, Nadine, comes around to tell Aileen she has an exceptional child. "Leon's beautiful," she says. "He's learning to read."

The boy's shown a change since he got the glasses, Aileen admits, but she thinks he may be mental. He's in the back room amusing himself with the



"Love to join you, Ed, but I'm really jammed up here and I'm just grabbing a bite at my desk."

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sound of names—Travis, Walter, Stanley, Greg. "No kin to me," he says. One of his sisters has told him not to say those names. While Nadine's there, Leon comes in for the family's library, Volume B of the World Book, and carries it upstairs with his glasses.

"He can't read it," Aileen apologizes. "It's got little pictures."

"He's really beautiful," Nadine assures her.

When he came home from the doctor, Leon gloated around his family, "I didn't have to take medicine. The medicine's right in the glass." The headaches have gone away. Avery likes that notion: having your face next to the cure the whole time and not having to swallow it. At first Aileen argued they didn't have the money—the welfare wouldn't pay this time—but Avery said he had to have a pair. With Mr. Granger's signature, the bank promised him fifty dollars for spectacles.

Nadine has taken the Deals on as a project. She's told Mrs. Presnell they have Elizabethan speech patterns. It doesn't matter that they used her pamphlet, "Protein Without Slaughter," to start a fire. She says Leon could skip first grade. She's given him a ruled copybook, and Leon has told her three sentences to put in it for him to practice:

> Thurman Deal had four names.
> You can know him by the diamond on his leg.
> He's not dangerous.

WHEN Mr. Granger notices Aileen is showing, he says she can have the house another year if Avery will promise to work regularly. Granger wants a third cutting of alfalfa this summer, and Avery has vowed to stay in the fields. The evening he complains of short breath, Thurman cadges a ride for him at the corner while Avery rolls in the grass. Later, while Avery nurses himself in front of Drug Fair's window, Thurman, still in Worton, has returned down the road to his cousin's house.

"He's not here," Aileen says from the doorway.

"Where you going?" Thurman calls to the scattering children. "I ain't going to spray you."

Leon and his sisters circle back slowly.

"Go ahead. Jump your rope," Thurman says. "I was just watching."

Leon has been told not to say his new words, so now the rope turns again while "Mary's sailor goes to sea" under the Deals' sycamore and Thurman waits to ask where their mother keeps the rest of the dollars from the money tree.

"You couldn't get it anyway," Leon says, "because the box is locked and it's too high to reach." The girls are double-skipping, ducking in and out of their spinning cage. The play speeds up as their mother argues with Thurman inside. And Leon begins to say the forbidden names, fast, and faster, until they become sounds responsible for themselves:

> Walter Travis Stanley Greg
> Had a tattoo on his leg.

They're telling him to stop, but he yells louder as Thurman comes out the door, Aileen following. She says give it back or she's going to law, and Leon shouts his rhyme in the robber's face.

When they find the broken box in the road, Aileen cries because it was her grandmother's. Avery comes home and says he never owed Thurman that much for aspirin. Next morning, they walk, in family, into the village to tell people what happened and get the money back. Thurman is there on the store porch.

"I never owed you that much," Avery says.

Thurman asks where the boy learned his words.

"I never owed him that much," Avery insists to Mrs. Presnell and to Holly Kearns and Mr. Rowland. He says he's calling the police, but Thurman occupies the phone booth and won't give it up.

THURMAN DEAL is gone. He's left his room in Worton and taken the money and two rifles from the wall in Mr. Rowland's den and the tape deck from the hippies' van. Mrs. Presnell says the police are looking for him. He was seen in Winchester, where he pawned the guns and the tape machine. Leon doubts they'll find him in Virginia. He supposes his cousin's gone to another state on an airplane.

"He'll come back," Aileen warns. "He'll shoot someone."

Avery says he doesn't care. He tacks Thurman's handbill to the utility pole next to the store. Before rain and wind destroy the poster, the village has its fugitive in clearest focus. "I never knew he'd had two wives," Holly Kearns says. Reah Harrell thinks she could have done without knowing where the birthmark was. And who needs fingerprints, she says, when they all know his face like the back of their *own* hand.

Since Thurman is at large, Leon stays close to his father. He watches from the ladder while Avery patches the roof with tar and nails tin under the eaves where grackles and starlings have been fighting over entrance to the attic. Aileen says Avery ought to do something about the holes where people come in: she wants locks on the doors and windows. "And don't think you don't look silly in those," she says. The doctor has told Avery his glasses are only for reading, but sometimes he wears them at work. They're just like Leon's, with clear rims that reflect a pink light.

Leon, blocking his father's way on the ladder, says, "You can't come down until you say it. Like this . . . thurmandealthurmandeal." He makes Avery repeat it with him very fast until the robber's face disappears completely, until their cousin becomes a noise. If Thurman comes back, Avery knows what to do. He'll look at him right through the glass and tell him, "No more aspirin, no more spots. I see you clear for a thief."

IN her last month, Aileen tells the women she's been sick with knowing her husband's so far in debt. But Avery just says a girl baby's bound to be sitting heavy on her stomach. "For a man without transportation like that to borrow on reading glasses when he's got nothing to read," Holly Kearns says to Aileen. "Is the boy still talking to himself?" She knows how to get Aileen worked up. It's good for her to cry, Holly tells her.

The baby is two weeks late and Thurman Deal has been seen again in Winchester. Aileen says she can't carry any longer. They have to force the labor on her, Avery explains to Leon, and if they do that it would have to be a girl.

After the daughter is born, Mr. Granger stops by to congratulate the family, but Avery and the boy have gone reading in Clayton again.

They're looking at labels on the clothes in Drug Fair and old newspapers in the laundromat and directions on the washing machines. Moving under the arcade, they wave behind their lenses at people they know and at some they don't. Avery hasn't missed work in three weeks. When his note is paid, Mr. Clarke at the bank is going to let him borrow on a pair with turtle rims and shade glass. Leon has found something he likes the sound of. Repeating it to himself, he has to stop or bust out laughing.

—JOHN ROLFE GARDINER

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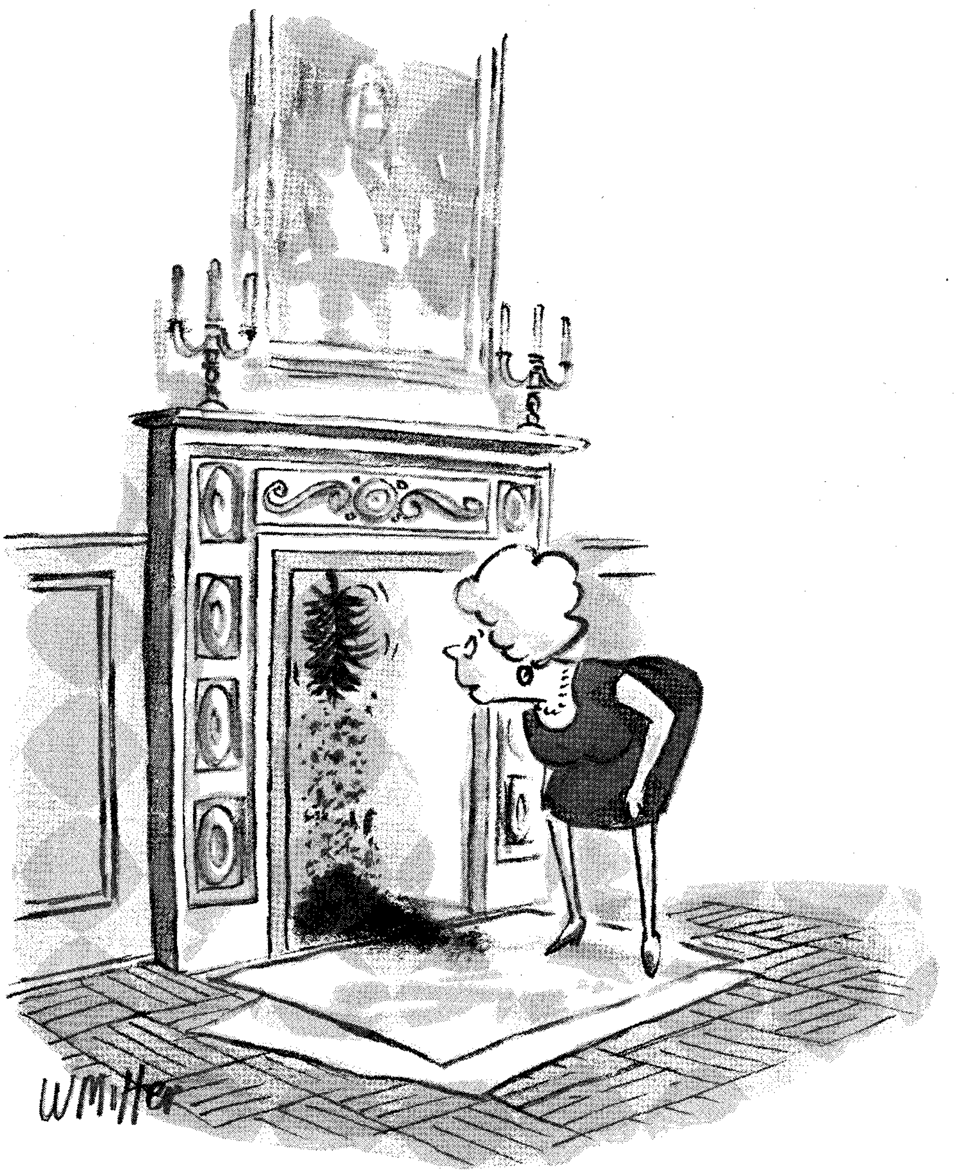


"I said it's not often one gets one's chimney swept by a person with a B.A. from Sarah Lawrence."

Nevertheless, some business lobbyists worry that last year's successes won't automatically continue. "If we start sitting on our laurels, we'll get blind-sided," warns Thomas Korologos, a top business lobbyist.—*Wall Street Journal.*

Top lobbyist and master of the vivid phrase.

✻ PROFILES ✻

THE GIRL IN THE BLACK HELMET

NONE of this would have happened if I had not noticed, while lying late in bed on a hot Sunday morning last year in Santa Monica and flipping through the TV guide for the impending week, that one of the local public-broadcasting channels had decided to show, at 1 P.M. that very January day, a film on which my fantasies had fed ever since I first saw it, a quarter of a century before. Even for Channel 28, it was an eccentric piece of programming. I wondered how many of my Southern Californian neighbors would be tempted to forgo their poolside champagne brunches, their bicycle jaunts along Ocean Front Walk, their health-food picnics in Topanga Canyon, or their surfboard battles with the breakers of Malibu in order to watch a silent picture, shot in Berlin just fifty years earlier, about an artless young hedonist who, meaning no harm, rewards her lovers—and eventually herself—with the prize of violent death. Although the film is a tragedy, it is also a celebration of the pleasure principle. Outside in the midday sunshine, California was celebrating the same principle, with the shadows of mortality left out.

I got to my set in time to catch the credits. The director: Georg Wilhelm Pabst, reigning maestro of German cinema in the late nineteen-twenties. The script: Adapted by Ladislaus Vajda from "Erdgeist" ("Earth Spirit") and "Die Büchse der Pandora" ("Pandora's Box"), two scabrously erotic plays written in the eighteen-nineties by Frank Wedekind. For his movie, Pabst chose the title of the later work, though the screenplay differed markedly from Wedekind's original text: "Pandora's Box" belongs among the few films that have succeeded in improving on theatrical chefs-d'œuvre. For his heroine, Lulu (the dominant figure in both plays), Pabst outraged a whole generation of German actresses by choosing a twenty-one-year-old girl from Kansas whom he had never met, who was currently working for Paramount in Hollywood, and who spoke not a word of any language other than English. This was Louise Brooks. She made only twenty-four films, in a movie career that began in 1925 and ended, with enigmatic suddenness, in 1938. Two of them were masterpieces: "Pandora's Box" and its immediate successor, also directed by Pabst—"The Diary of a Lost Girl." Most, however, were assembly-line studio products. Yet around her, with a luxuriance that proliferates every year, a literature has grown up. I append a few excerpts:

> An actress who needed no directing, but could move across the screen causing the work of art to be born by her mere presence.—*Lotte H. Eisner, French critic.*

> Her youthful admirers see in her an actress of brilliance, a luminescent personality, and a beauty unparalleled in film history.—*Kevin Brownlow, British director and movie historian.*

> One of the most mysterious and potent figures in the history of the cinema . . . she was one of the first performers to penetrate to the heart of screen acting.—*David Thomson, British critic.*

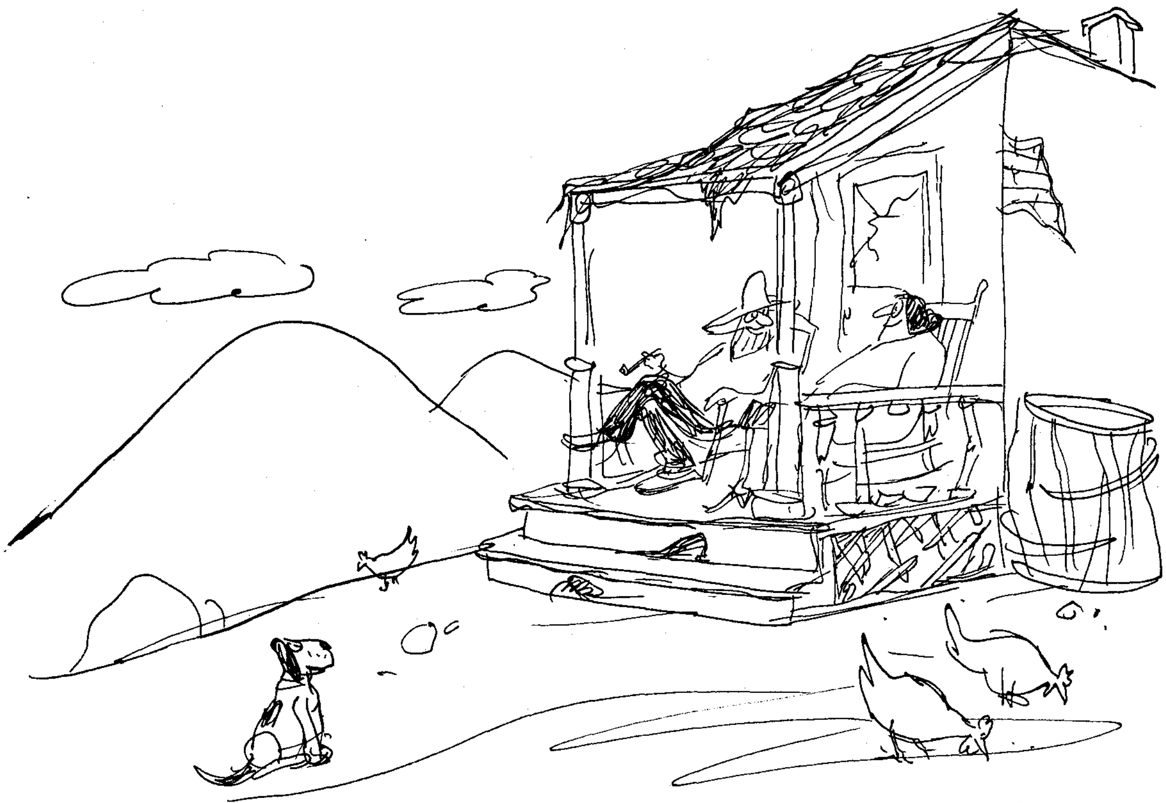
> Louise Brooks is the only woman who had the ability to transfigure no matter what film into a masterpiece. . . . Louise is the perfect apparition, the dream woman, the being without whom the cinema would be a poor thing. She is much more than a myth, she is a magical presence, a real phantom, the magnetism of the cinema.—*Ado Kyrou, French critic.*

> Those who have seen her can never forget her. She is the modern actress *par excellence*. . . . As soon as she takes the screen, fiction disappears along with art, and one has the impression of being present at a documentary. The camera seems to have caught her by surprise, without her knowledge. She is the intelligence of the cinematic process, the perfect incarnation of that which is photogenic; she embodies all that the cinema rediscovered in its last years of silence: complete naturalness and complete simplicity. Her art is so pure that it becomes invisible.—*Henri Langlois, director of the Cinémathèque Française.*

On Channel 28, I stayed with the film to its end, which is also Lulu's. Of the climactic sequence, so decorously understated, Louise Brooks once wrote, in *Sight & Sound*, "It is Christmas Eve and she is about to receive the gift which has been her dream since childhood. Death by a sexual maniac." When it was over, I switched channels and returned to the real world of game shows and pet-food commercials, relieved to find that the spell she cast was still as powerful as ever. Brooks reminds me of the scene in "Citizen Kane" where Everett Sloane, as Kane's aging business manager, recalls a girl in a white dress whom he saw in his youth when he was crossing over to Jersey on a ferry. They never met or spoke. "I only saw her for one second," he says, "and she didn't see me at all—but I'll bet a month hasn't gone by since that I haven't thought of that girl."

I had now, by courtesy of Channel 28, seen "Pandora's Box" for the third time. My second encounter with the film had taken place several years earlier, in France. Consulting my journal, I found the latter experience recorded with the baroque extravagance that seems to overcome all those who pay tribute to Brooks. I unflinchingly quote:

> Infatuation with L. Brooks reinforced by second viewing of "Pandora." She has run through my life like a magnetic thread—this shameless urchin tomboy, this unbroken, unbreakable porcelain filly. She is a prairie princess, equally at home in a waterfront bar and in the royal suite at Neuschwanstein; a creature of impulse, a creator of impulses, a temptress with no pretensions, capable of dissolving into a giggling fit at a peak of erotic ecstasy; amoral but totally selfless, with that sleek jet *cloche* of hair that rings such a peal of bells in my subconscious. In short, the only star actress



"On the other hand, the air around here is always acceptable."

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I can imagine either being enslaved by or wanting to enslave; and a dark lady worthy of any poet's devotion:

> For I have sworn thee fair, and
>   thought thee bright,
> Who art as black as hell, as dark
>   as night.

SOME basic information about Rochester, New York: With two hundred and sixty-three thousand inhabitants, it is the sixth-largest city in the state, bestriding the Genesee River at its outlet into Lake Ontario. Here, in the eighteen-eighties, George Eastman completed the experiments that enabled him to manufacture the Kodak camera, which, in turn, enabled ordinary people to capture monochrome images, posed or spontaneous, of the world around them. He was in at the birth of movies, too. The flexible strips of film used in Thomas Edison's motion-picture machine were first produced by Eastman, in 1889. Rochester is plentifully dotted with monuments to the creator of the Kodak, among them a palatial Georgian house, with fifty rooms and a lofty neoclassical portico, that he built for himself in 1905. When he died, in 1932, he left his mansion to the University of Rochester, of whose president it became the official home. Shortly after the Second World War, Eastman House took on a new identity. It opened its doors to the public and offered, to quote from its brochure, "the world's most important collection of pictures, films, and apparatus showing the development of the art and technology of photography." In 1972, it was imposingly renamed the International Museum of Photography. Its library now contains around five thousand movies, many of them unique copies, and seven of them—a larger number than any other archive can boast—featuring Louise Brooks. Hence I decide to pay a visit to the city, where I check in at a motel in the late spring of 1978. Thanks to the generous cooperation of Dr. John B. Kuyper, the director of the museum's film department, I am to see its hoard of Brooks pictures—six of them new to me—within the space of two days. Screenings will be held in the Dryden Theatre, a handsome auditorium that was added to the main building in 1950 as a gift from Eastman's niece, Ellen Andrus, and her husband, George Dryden.

On the eve of Day One, I mentally recap what I have learned of Brooks's early years. Born in 1906 in Cherryvale, Kansas, she was the second of four children sired by Leonard Brooks, a hardworking lawyer of kindly disposition and diminutive build, for whom she felt nothing approaching love. She herself was never more than five feet two and a half inches tall, but she raised her stature on-screen by wearing heels as high as six inches. Her mother, née Myra Rude, was the eldest of nine children, and she warned Mr. Brooks before their marriage that she had spent her entire life thus far looking after kid brothers and sisters, that she had no intention of repeating the experience with children of her own, and that any progeny she might bear him would, in effect, have to fend for themselves. The result, because Myra Brooks was a woman of high spirits who took an infectious delight in the arts, was not a cold or neglectful upbringing. Insistent on liberty for herself, she passed on a love of liberty to her offspring. Louise absorbed it greedily. Pirouetting appealed to her; encouraged by her mother, she took dancing lessons, and by the age of ten she was making paid appearances at Kiwanis and Rotary festivities. At fifteen, already a beauty *sui generis*, as surviving photographs show, with her hair, close-cropped at the nape to expose what Christopher Isherwood has called "that unique imperious neck of hers," cascading in ebony bangs down the high, intelligent forehead and descending on either side of her eyes in spit curls slicked forward at the cheekbones, like a pair of enamelled parentheses—at fifteen, she left high school and went to New York with her dance teacher. There she successfully auditioned for the Denishawn Dancers, which had been founded in 1915 by Ruth St. Denis and Ted Shawn, and was by far the most adventurous dance company in America. She started out as a student, but soon graduated to full membership in the troupe, with which she toured the country from 1922 to 1924. One of her fellow-dancers, Martha Graham, became a lifelong friend. "I learned to act while watching Martha Graham dance," she said later, in an interview with Kevin Brownlow, "and I learned to move in film from watching Chaplin."

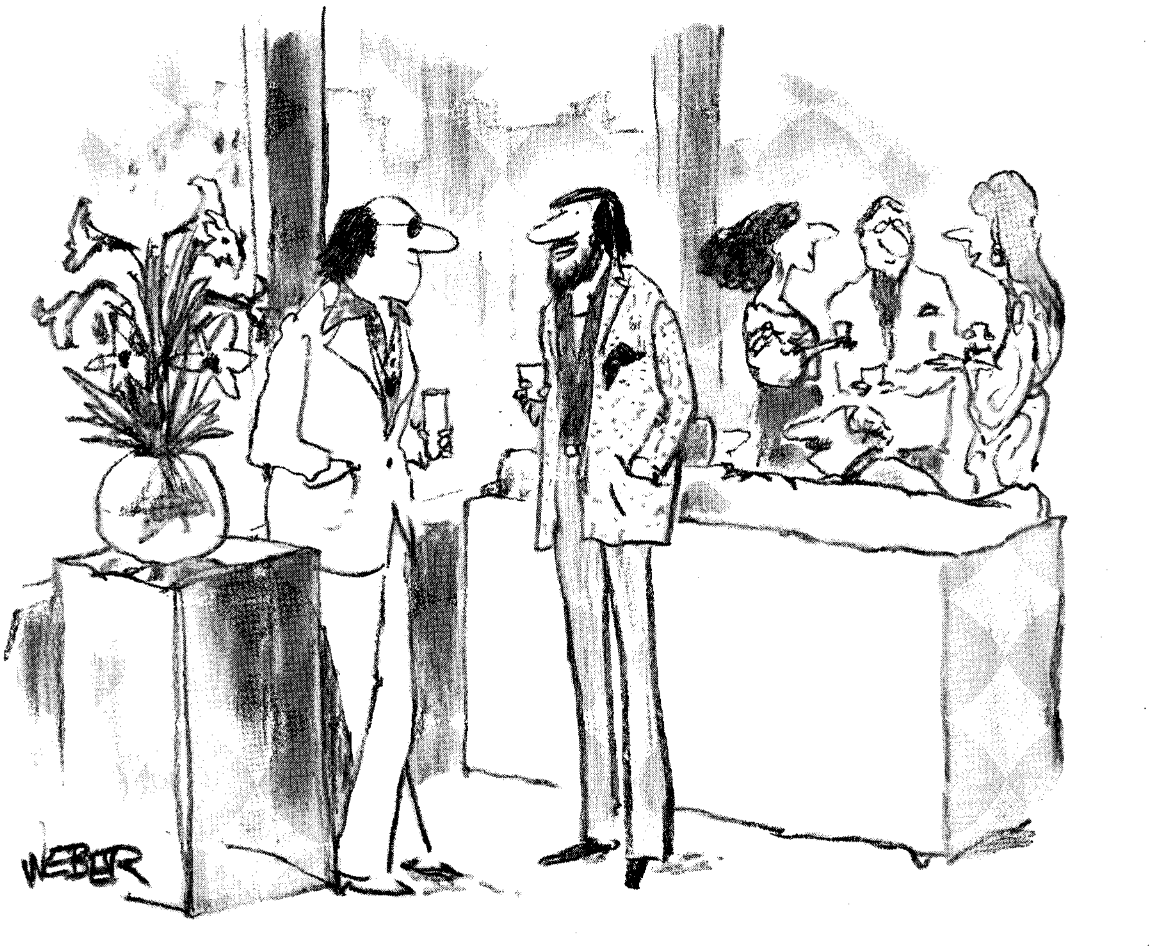
Suddenly, however, the discipline involved in working for Denishawn grew oppressive. Brooks was fired for lacking a sense of vocation, and the summer of 1924 found her back in New York, dancing in the chorus of George White's "Scandals." After three months of this, a whim seized her, and she embarked without warning for London, where she performed the Charleston at the Café de Paris, near Piccadilly Circus. By New York standards, she thought Britain's Bright Young Things a moribund bunch, and when Evelyn Waugh wrote "Vile Bodies" about them, she said that only a genius could have made a masterpiece out of such glum material. Early in 1925, with no professional prospects, she sailed for Manhattan on borrowed money, only to be greeted by Florenz Ziegfeld with the offer of a job in a musical comedy called "Louie the 14th," starring Leon Errol. She accepted, but the pattern of her subsequent behavior left no doubt that what she meant by liberty and independence was what others defined as irresponsibility and self-indulgence. Of the director of "Louie the 14th," she afterward wrote, again for *Sight & Sound*, "He detested all of Ziegfeld's spoiled beauties, but most of all me because on occasion, when I had other commitments, I would wire my non-appearance to the theatre." In May, 1925, she made her movie début, at the Paramount Astoria Studio, on Long Island, playing a bit part in "The Street of Forgotten Men," of which no print is known to exist. She has written a vivid account of filmmaking in its Long Island days:

> The stages were freezing in the winter, steaming hot in the summer. The dressing rooms were windowless cubicles. We rode on the freight elevator, crushed by lights and electricians. But none of that mattered, because the writers, directors, and cast were free from all supervision. Jesse Lasky, Adolph Zukor, and Walter Wanger never left the Paramount office on Fifth Avenue, and the head of production never came on the set. There were writers and directors from Princeton and Yale. Motion pictures did not consume us. When work finished, we dressed in evening clothes, dined at the Colony or "21," and went to the theatre.
>
> The difference in Hollywood was that the studio was run by B. P. Schulberg, a coarse exploiter who propositioned every actress and policed every set. To love books was a big laugh. There was no theatre, no opera, no concerts—just those god-damned movies.

Despite Brooks's erratic conduct in "Louie the 14th," Ziegfeld hired her to join Will Rogers and W. C. Fields in the 1925 edition of his "Follies." It proved to be her last Broadway show. One of her many admirers that year was the atrabilious wit Herman Mankiewicz, then employed as second-string drama critic of the *Times*. Blithely playing truant from the "Follies," she attended the opening of "No, No, Nanette" on Mankiewicz's arm. As the houselights faded, her escort, who was profoundly drunk, announced his intention of falling asleep and asked Brooks to make notes on the show for use in his review. She obliged, and the *Times* next day echoed her opinion that "No, No, Nanette" was "a highly meritorious paradigm of its kind." (Somewhat cryptically, the review added that the score contained "more familiar quotations from itself . . . than even 'Hamlet.' ") Escapades like this did nothing to endear her to the other, more dedicated Ziegfeld showgirls, but an abiding intimacy grew up between her and W. C. Fields, in whose dressing room she was always graciously received. Later, in a passage that tells us as much about its author as about her subject, she wrote:

> He was an isolated person. As a young man he stretched out his hand to Beauty and Love and they thrust it away. Gradually he reduced reality to exclude all but his work, filling the gaps with alcohol whose dim eyes transformed the world into a distant view of harmless shadows. He was also a solitary person. Years of travelling alone around the world with his juggling act taught him the value of solitude and the release it gave his mind. . . . Most of his life will remain unknown. But the history of no life is a jest.

In September, 1925, the "Follies" left town on a national tour. Brooks stayed behind and sauntered through the role of a bathing beauty in a Paramount movie called "The American Venus." Paramount and M-G-M were both pressing her to sign five-year contracts, and she looked for advice to Walter Wanger, one of the former company's top executives, with whom she was having an intermittent affair. "If, at this crucial moment in my career," she said long afterward in *London Magazine*, "Walter had given me some faith in my screen personality and my acting ability, he might have saved me from further mauling by the beasts who prowled Broadway and Hollywood." Instead, he urged her to take the Metro offer, arguing that if she chose Paramount everyone would assume that she had got the job by



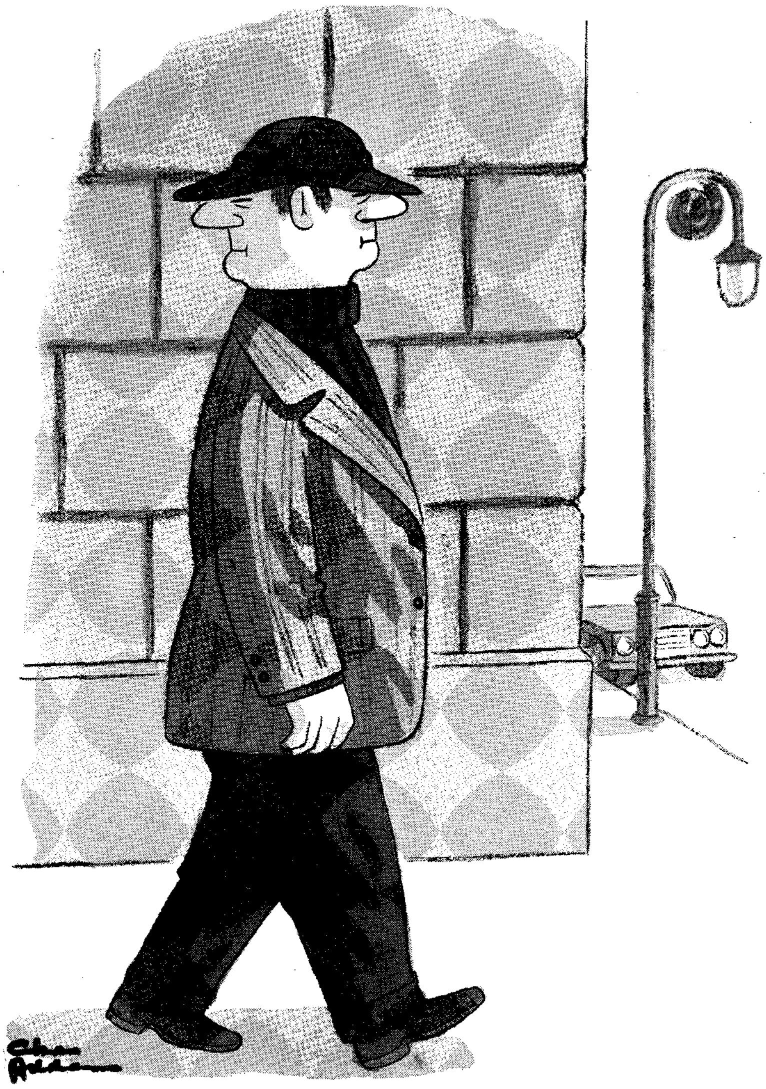
"I'm dissatisfied with my life as it stands and yearn for deeper fulfillment. How about you?"

sharing his bed and that her major attribute was not talent but sexual accessibility. Incensed by his line of reasoning, she defiantly signed with Paramount.

In the course of twelve months—during which Brooks's friend Humphrey Bogart, seven years her senior, was still laboring on Broadway, with four seasons to wait before the dawn of his film career—Brooks made six full-length pictures. The press began to pay court to her. *Photoplay*, whose reporter she received reclining in bed, said of her, "She is so very Manhattan. Very young. Exquisitely hard-boiled. Her black eyes and sleek black hair are as brilliant as Chinese lacquer. Her skin is white as a camellia. Her legs are lyric." She worked with several of the bright young directors who gave Paramount its reputation for sophisticated comedy; e.g., Frank Tuttle, Malcolm St. Clair, and Edward Sutherland. Chronologically, the list of her credits ran as follows: "The American Venus" (for Tuttle, who taught her that the way to get laughs was to play perfectly straight; he directed Bebe Daniels in four movies and Clara Bow in six). "A Social Celebrity" (for St. Clair, who cast Brooks opposite the immaculately caddish Adolphe Menjou, of whose style she later remarked, "He never felt anything. He used to say, 'Now I do Lubitsch No. 1,' 'Now I do Lubitsch No. 2.' And that's exactly what he did. You felt nothing, working with him, and yet see him on the screen—he was a great actor"). "It's the Old Army Game" (for Sutherland, who had been Chaplin's directorial assistant on "A Woman of Paris," and who made five pictures with W. C. Fields, of which this was the first, and of which the third, "International House," is regarded by many Fieldsian authorities as the Master's crowning achievement; Brooks married Sutherland, a hard-drinking playboy, in 1926—an error that was rectified inside two years by divorce). "The Show-Off" (for St. Clair, adapted from the Broadway hit by George Kelly). "Just Another Blonde" (on loan to First National). And, finally, to round off the year's work, "Love 'Em and Leave 'Em" (for Tuttle), the first Brooks film of which Eastman House has a copy. Here begin my notes on the sustained and solitary Brooks banquet that the museum laid before me.

Day One: Evelyn Brent is the nominal star of "Love 'Em and Leave 'Em," a slick and graceful comedy about Manhattan shopgirls, but light-fingered Louise, as Brent's jazz-baby younger sister, steals the picture with bewitching insouciance. She is twenty, and her body is still plump, quite husky enough for work in the fields; but the face, framed in its black proscenium arch of hair, is already Lulu's in embryo, especially when she dons a white top hat to go to a costume ball (at which she dances a definitive Charleston). The plot calls for her to seduce her sister's boyfriend, a feckless window dresser, and she does so with that fusion of amorality and innocence which was to become her trademark. (During these scenes, I catch myself humming a tune from "Pins and Needles": "I used to be on the daisy chain, now I'm a chain-store daisy.") Garbo could give us innocence, and Dietrich amorality, on the grandest possible scale; only Brooks could play the simple, unabashed hedonist, whose appetite for pleasure is so radiant that even when it causes suffering to her and others we cannot find it in ourselves to reproach her. Most actresses tend to pass moral judgments on the characters they play. Their performances issue tacit commands to the audience: "Love me," "Hate me," "Laugh at me," "Weep with me," and so forth. We get none of this from Brooks, whose presence before the camera merely declares, "Here I am. Make what you will of me." She does not care what we think of her. Indeed, she ignores us. We seem to be spying on unrehearsed reality, glimpsing what the great photographer Henri Cartier-Bresson later called "*le moment qui se sauve*." In the best of her silent films, Brooks—with no conscious intention of doing so—is reinventing the art of screen acting. I suspect that she was helped rather than hindered by the fact that she never took a formal acting lesson. "When I acted, I hadn't the slightest idea of what I was doing," she said once to Richard Leacock, the documentary filmmaker. "I was simply playing myself, which is the hardest thing in the world to do—if you *know* that it's hard. I didn't, so it seemed easy. I had nothing to unlearn. When I first worked with Pabst, he was furious, because he approached people intellectually and you couldn't approach me intellectually, because there was nothing to approach." To watch Brooks is to recall Oscar Wilde's Lady Bracknell, who observes, "Ignorance is like a delicate, exotic fruit; touch it and the bloom is gone."

Rereading the above paragraph, I pause at the sentence "She does not care what we think of her." Query: Was it precisely this quality, which contributed so much to her success on the screen, that enabled



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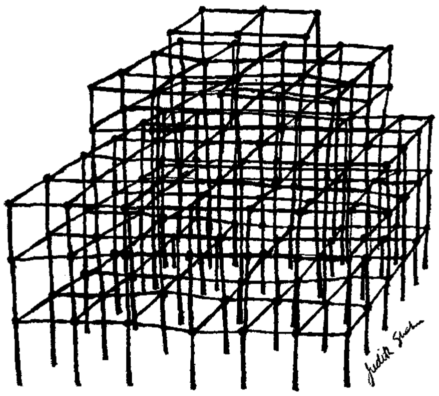
her, in later years, to throw that success so lightly away?

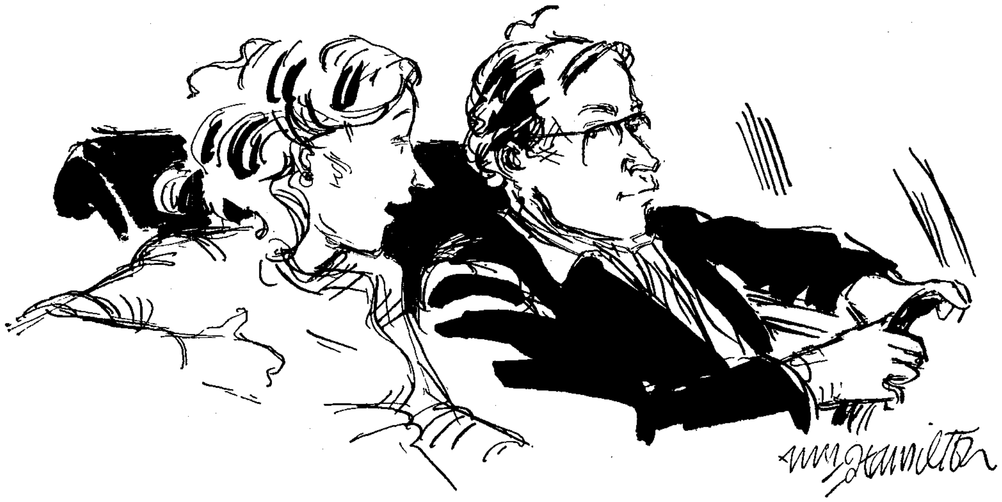
To return to Frank Tuttle's film: Tempted by a seedy and lecherous old horseplayer who lives in her rooming house, Brooks goes on a betting spree with funds raised by her fellow-shopgirls in aid of the Women's Welfare League. The aging gambler is played by Osgood Perkins (father of Tony), of whom Brooks said to Kevin Brownlow years afterward, "The best actor I ever worked with was Osgood Perkins. . . . You know what makes an actor great to work with? Timing. You don't have to feel anything. It's like dancing with a perfect dancing partner. Osgood Perkins would give you a line so that you would react perfectly. It was timing—because *emotion means nothing*." (Emphasis mine.) This comment reveals what Brooks has learned about acting in the cinema: Emotion per se, however deeply felt, is not enough. It is what the actor shows—the contraband that he or she can smuggle past the camera—that matters to the audience. A variation of this dictum cropped up in the mouth of John Striebel's popular comic-strip heroine Dixie Dugan, who was based on Brooks and first appeared in 1926. Bent on getting a job in "The Zigfold Follies," Dixie reflected, "All there is to this Follies racket is to *be cool and look hot*." Incidentally, Brooks's comparison of Perkins with a dancing partner reminds me of a remark she once made about Fatty Arbuckle, who, under the assumed name of William Goodrich, apathetically directed her in a 1931 two-reeler called "Windy Riley Goes to Hollywood": "He sat in his chair like a man dead. He had been very nice and sweetly dead ever since the scandal that ruined his career. . . . Oh, I thought he was magnificent in films. He was a wonderful dancer—a wonderful ballroom dancer in his heyday. It was like floating in the arms of a huge doughnut."

What images do I retain of Brooks in "Love 'Em and Leave 'Em"? Many comedic details; e.g., the scene in which she fakes tears of contrition by furtively dabbling her cheeks with water from a handily placed goldfish bowl, and our last view of her, with all her sins unpunished, merrily sweeping off in a Rolls-Royce with the owner of the department store. And, throughout, every closeup of that blameless, unblemished face.

In 1927, Brooks moved with Paramount to Hollywood and played in four pictures—"Evening Clothes" (with Menjou), "Rolled Stockings," "The City Gone Wild," and "Now We're in the Air," none of which are in the Eastman vaults. To commemorate that year, I have a publicity photo taken at a house she rented in Laurel Canyon: poised on tiptoe with arms outstretched, she stands on the diving board of her pool, wearing a one-piece black bathing suit with a tight white belt, and looking like a combination of Odette and Odile in some modern-dress version of "Swan Lake." Early in 1928, she was lent to Fox for a picture (happily preserved by the museum) that was to change her career—"A Girl in Every Port," written and directed by Howard Hawks, who had made his first film only two years before. Along with Carole Lombard, Rita Hayworth, Jane Russell, and Lauren Bacall, Brooks thus claims a place among the actresses on David Thomson's list (in his "A Biographical Dictionary of Film") of performers who were "either discovered or brought to new life by Hawks." As in "Love 'Em and Leave 'Em," she plays an amoral pleasure-lover, but this time the mood is much darker. Her victim is Victor McLaglen, a seagoing roughneck engaged in perpetual sexual rivalry with his closest friend (Robert Armstrong); the embattled relationship between the two men brings to mind the skirmishing of Flagg and Quirt in "What Price Glory?," which was filmed with McLaglen in 1926. In "A Girl in Every Port," McLaglen, on a binge in Marseilles, sees a performance by an open-air circus whose star turn is billed as "Mam'selle Godiva, Neptune's Bride and the Sweetheart of the Sea." The submarine coquette is, of course, Brooks, looking svelter than of old, and clad in tights, spangled panties, tiara, and black velvet cloak. Her act consists of diving off the top of a ladder into a shallow tank of water. Instantly besotted, the bully McLaglen becomes the fawning lapdog of this "dame of class." He proudly introduces her to Armstrong, who, unwilling to wreck his buddy's illusions, refrains from revealing that the lady's true character, as he knows from a previous encounter with her, is that of a small-time gold-digger. In a scene charged with the subtlest eroticism, Brooks sits beside Armstrong on a sofa and coaxes McLaglen to clean her shoes. He readily obeys. As he does so, she begins, softly, reminiscently, but purposefully, to fondle Armstrong's thigh. To these caresses Armstrong does not respond, but neither does he reject them. With one man at her feet and another at her fingertips, she is like a cat idly licking its lips over two bowls of cream. This must surely have been the sequence that convinced Pabst, when the film was shown in Berlin, that he had found the actress he wanted for "Pandora's Box." By the end of the picture, Brooks has turned the two friends into mortal enemies, reducing McLaglen to a state of murderous rage mixed with grief which Emil Jannings could hardly have bettered. There is no melodrama in her exercise of sexual power. No effort, either: she is simply following her nature.



After her fling with Fox, Paramount cast its young star (now aged twenty-one) in another downbeat triangle drama, "Beggars of Life," to be directed by another young director, William Wellman. Like Hawks, he was thirty-two years old. (The cinema is unique among the arts in that there was a time in its history when almost all its practitioners were young. This was that time.) At first, the studio had trouble tracing Brooks's whereabouts. Having just divorced Edward Sutherland, she had fled to Washington with a new lover—George Marshall, a millionaire laundry magnate, who later became the owner of the Redskins football team. When she was found, she immediately returned to the Coast, though her zest for work was somewhat drained by a strong antipathy to one of her co-stars—Richard Arlen, with whom she had appeared in "Rolled Stockings"—and by overt hostility from Wellman, who regarded her as a dilettante. Despite these malign auguries, "Beggars of Life"—available at Eastman House—turned out to be one of her best films. Adapted from a novel by Jim Tully, it foreshadows the Depression movies of the thirties. Brooks plays the adopted daughter of a penniless old farmer who attempts, one sunny morning, to rape her. Seizing a shotgun, she kills him. As she is about to escape, the crime is discovered by a tramp (Arlen) who knocks at the door in search of food. They run away together, with Brooks wearing oversized masculine clothes, topped off by a large peaked cap. (This was her first serious venture into the rich territory of sexual ambiguity, so prosperously



"I love the way you never mention mileage."

cultivated in later years by Garbo, Dietrich, et al.) Soon they fall in with a gang of hoboes, whose leader—a ferocious but teachable thug, beautifully played by Wallace Beery—forms the third point of the triangle. He sees through Brooks's disguise and proposes that since the police already know about her male imposture, it would be safer to dress her as a girl. He goes in search of female attire, but what he brings back is marginally too young: a gingham dress, and a bonnet tied under the chin, in which Brooks looks like a woman masquerading as a child, a sort of adult Lolita. She stares at us in her new gear, at once innocent and gravely perverse. The rivalry for her affection comes to its height when Beery pulls a gun and tells Arlen to hand her over. Brooks jumps between them, protecting Arlen, and explains that she would prefer death to life without him. We believe her; and so, to his own befuddled amazement, does Beery. There is really no need for the title in which he says that he has often heard about love but never until now known what it was. He puts his gun away and lets them go.

Footnote: During the transvestite scenes, several dangerous feats were performed for Brooks by a stunt man named Harvey. One night, attracted by his flamboyant courage, she slept with him. After breakfast next day, she strolled out onto the porch of the hotel in the California village where the location sequences were being shot. Harvey was there, accompanied by a group of hoboes in the cast. He rose and gripped her by the arm. "Just a minute, Miss Brooks," he said loudly. "I've got something to ask you. I guess you know my job depends on my health." He then named a Paramount executive whom Brooks had never met, and continued, "Everybody knows you're his girl and he has syphilis, and what I want to know is: Do you have syphilis?" After a long and frozen pause, he added, "Another reason I want to know is that my girl is coming up at noon to drive me back to Hollywood." Brooks somehow withdrew to her room without screaming. Events like these may account for the lack of agonized regret with which she prematurely ended her movie career. Several years later, after she had turned down the part that Jean Harlow eventually played in Wellman's "The Public Enemy," she ran into the director in a New York bar. "You always hated making pictures, Louise," he said sagely. She did not bother to reply that it was not pictures she hated but Hollywood.

"The Canary Murder Case" (directed by Malcolm St. Clair from a script based on S. S. Van Dine's detective story, with William Powell as Philo Vance; not in the Eastman collection) was the third, and last, American movie that Brooks made in 1928. By now, her face was beginning to be internationally known, and the rushes of this film indicated that Paramount would soon have a major star on its hands. At the time, the studio was preparing to take the plunge into talkies. As Brooks afterward wrote in *Image* (a journal sponsored by Eastman House), front offices all over Hollywood saw in this radical change "a splendid opportunity . . . for breaking contracts, cutting salaries, and taming the stars." In the autumn of 1928, when her own contract called for a financial raise, B. P. Schulberg, the West Coast head of Paramount, summoned her to his office and said that the promised increase could not be granted in the new situation. "The Canary Murder Case" was being shot silent, but who knew whether Brooks could speak? (A fragile argument, since her voice was of bell-like clarity.) He presented her with a straight choice: either to continue at her present figure (seven hundred and fifty dollars a week) or to quit when the current picture was finished. To Schulberg's surprise, she chose to quit. Almost as an afterthought, he revealed when she was rising to leave that he had lately received from G. W. Pabst a bombardment of cabled requests for her services in "Pandora's Box," all of which he had turned down.

Then forty-three years old, Pabst had shown an extraordinary flair for picking and molding actresses whose careers were upward bound; Asta Nielsen, Brigitte Helm, and Greta Garbo (in her third film, "The Joyless Street," which was also her first outside Sweden) headed a remarkable list. Unknown to Schulberg, Brooks had already heard about the Pabst offer—and the weekly salary of a thousand dollars that went with it—from her lover, George Marshall, whose source was a gossipy director at M-G-M. She coolly told Schulberg to inform Pabst that she would soon be available. "At that very hour in Berlin," she wrote later in *Sight & Sound*, "Marlene Dietrich was waiting with Pabst in his office." This was two years before "The Blue Angel" made Dietrich a star. What she crucially lacked, Pabst felt, was the innocence he wanted for his Lulu. In his own words, "Dietrich was too old and too obvious—one sexy look and the picture would become a burlesque. But I gave her a deadline, and the contract was about to be signed when Paramount cabled saying I could have Louise Brooks." The day that shooting ended on "The Canary Murder Case," Brooks raced out of Hollywood *en route* for Berlin, there to work for a man who was one of the four or five leading European directors but of whom a few weeks earlier she had never heard.

"Pandora's Box," with which I had my fourth encounter at Eastman House, could easily have emerged as a cautionary tale about a *grande cocotte* whose reward is the wages of sin. That seems to have been the impression left by Wedekind's two Lulu plays, which were made into a film in 1922 (not by Pabst) with Asta Nielsen in the lead. Summing up her predecessor's performance, Brooks said, "She played in the eye-rolling style of European silent acting. Lulu the man-eater devoured her sex victims . . . and then dropped dead in an acute attack of indigestion." The character obsessed many artists of the period. In 1928, Alban Berg began work on his twelve-tone opera "Lulu," the heart of which—beneath the stark and stylized sound patterns—was blatantly theatrical, throbbing with romantic agony. Where the Pabst-Brooks version of the Lulu story differs from the others is in its moral coolness. It assumes neither the existence of sin nor the necessity for retribution. It presents a series of events in which all the participants are seeking happiness, and it suggests that Lulu, whose notion of happiness is momentary fulfillment through sex, is not less admirable than those whose quest is for wealth or social advancement.

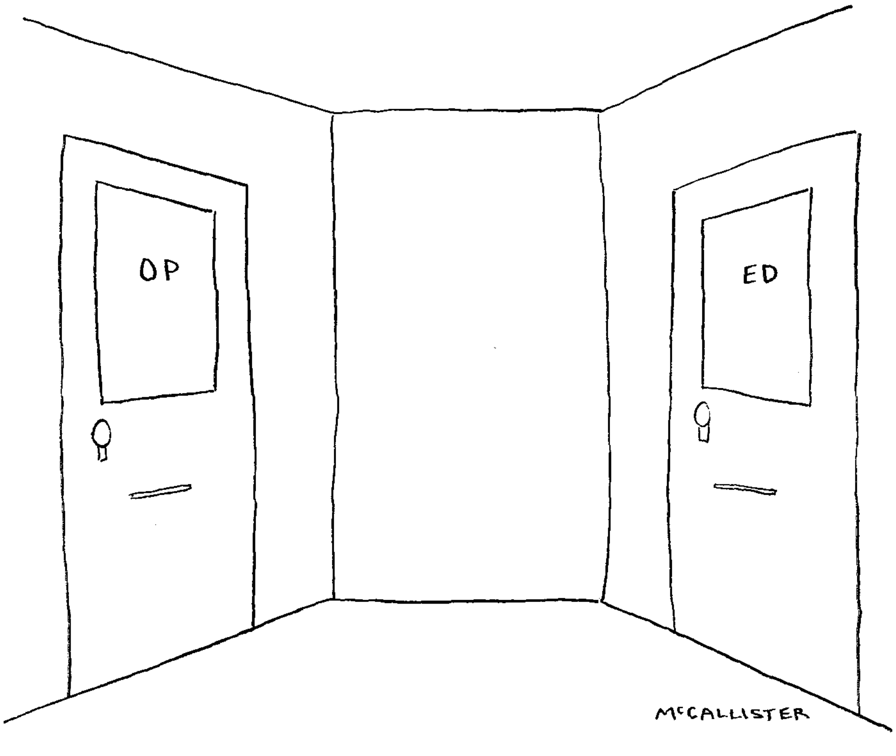
First sequence: Lulu in the Art Deco apartment in Berlin where she is kept by Peter Schön, a middle-aged newspaper proprietor. (In this role, the great Fritz Kortner, bulky but urbane, effortless in the exercise of power over everyone but his mistress, gives one of the cinema's most accurate and objective portraits of a capitalist potentate.) Dressed in a peignoir, Lulu is casually flirting with a man who has come to read the gas meter when the doorbell rings and Schigolch enters—a squat and shabby old man who was once Lulu's lover but is now down on his luck. She greets him with delight; as the disgruntled gas man departs, she swoops to rest on Schigolch's lap with the grace of a swan. The protective curve of her neck is unforgettable. Producing a mouth organ, Schigolch strikes up a tune, to which she performs a brief, Dionysiac, and authentically improvised little dance. (Until this scene was rehearsed, Pabst had no idea that Brooks was a trained dancer.) Watching her, I recollect something that Schigolch says in Wedekind's original text, though not in the film: "The animal is the only genuine thing in man. . . . What you have experienced as an animal, no misfortune can ever wrest from you. It remains yours for life." From the window, he points out a burly young man on the sidewalk: this is a friend of his named Rodrigo, a professional athlete who would like to work with her in an adagio act.

Unheralded, Peter Schön lets himself into the apartment, and Lulu has just time to hide Schigolch on the balcony with a bottle of brandy. Schön has come to end his affair with Lulu, having decided to make a socially advantageous match with the daughter of a Cabinet Minister. In Lulu's reaction to the news there is no fury. She simply sits on a sofa and extends her arms toward him with something like reassurance. Unmoved at first, Schön eventually responds, and they begin to make love. The drunken Schigolch inadvertently rouses Lulu's pet dog to a barking fit, and this disturbance provokes the hasty exit of Schön. On the stairs, he passes the muscle man Rodrigo, whom Schigolch presents to Lulu. Rodrigo flexes his impressive biceps, on which she gleefully swings, like a schoolgirl gymnast.

A scene in Schön's mansion shows us his son Alwa (Francis Lederer, in his pre-Hollywood days) busily composing songs for his new musical revue. Alwa is joined by the Countess Geschwitz (Alice Roberts), a tight-lipped lesbian who is designing the costumes. Lulu dashes in to announce her plans for a double act with Rodrigo, and it is immediately clear that both Alwa and the Countess have eyes for her. She strolls on into Peter Schön's study, where she picks up from the desk a photograph of his bride-to-be. Typically, she studies it with genuine interest; there's no narrowing of eyes or curling of lip. Peter Schön, who has entered the room behind her, snatches the picture from her hands and orders her to leave. Before doing so, she mischievously invents a rendezvous next day with Alwa, whom she kisses, to the young man's embarrassed bewilderment, full on the mouth. With a toss of the patent-leather hair and a glance, half-playful, half-purposeful, at Alwa, she departs. Alwa asks his father why he doesn't marry her. Rather too explosively to carry conviction, Peter replies that one doesn't marry women like that. He proposes that Alwa give her a featured role in the revue, and guarantees that his newspapers will make her a star. Alwa is overjoyed; but when his father warns him at all costs to beware of her, he quits the room in tongue-tied confusion.

So much for the exposition; the principal characters and the main thrust of the action have been lucidly established. Note that Lulu, for all her seductiveness, is essentially an exploited creature, not an exploiter; also that we are not (nor shall we ever be) invited to feel sorry for her. I've already referred to her birdlike movements and animal nature; let me add that in the context of the plot as a whole she resembles a glittering tropical fish in a tank full of predators. For the remainder of this synopsis, I'll confine myself to the four great set pieces on which the film's reputation rests.

(1) Intermission at the opening night of Alwa's revue: Pabst catches the backstage panic of scene-shifting and costume-changing with a kaleidoscopic brilliance that looks forward to Orson Welles' handling, twelve years later, of the operatic début of Susan Alexander Kane. Alwa and Geschwitz are there, revelling in what is obviously going to be a hit. Peter Schön escorts Marie, his fiancée, through the pass door to share the frenzy. Lulu, changing in the wings, catches sight of him and smiles. Stricken with embarrassment, he cuts her and leads Marie away. This treatment maddens Lulu, and she refuses to go on with the show: "I'll dance for the whole world, but not in front of that woman." She takes refuge in the property room, whither Peter follows her. Leaning against the wall, she sobs, shaking her



head mechanically from side to side, and then flings herself onto a pile of cushions, which she kicks and pummels. Despite her tantrum, she is watching Schön's every move. When he lights a cigarette to calm himself, she snaps, "Smoking's not allowed in here," and gives him a painful hack on the ankle. The mood of the scene swings from high histrionics through sly comedy to voluptuous intimacy. Soon Schön and Lulu are laughing, caressing, wholeheartedly making love. At this point, the door opens, framing Marie and Alwa. Unperturbed, Lulu rises in triumph, gathers up her costume, and sweeps past them to go onstage. Peter Schön's engagement is obviously over.

(2) The wedding reception: Lulu is in a snow-white bridal gown, suggesting less a victorious *cocotte* than a girl celebrating her First Communion. Peter's wealthy friends flock admiringly round her. She dances cheek to cheek with Geschwitz, who rabidly adores her. (The Belgian actress Alice Roberts, here playing what may be the first explicit lesbian in movie history, refused point-blank to look at Brooks with the requisite degree of lust. To solve the problem, Pabst stood in her line of vision, told her to regard him with passionate intensity, and photographed her in closeups, which he then intercut with shots of Brooks. Scenes like these presented no difficulty to Brooks herself. She used to say of a young woman I'll call Fritzi LaVerne, one of her best friends in the "Follies," "She liked boys when she was sober and girls when she was drunk. I never heard a man or a woman pan her in bed, so she must have been very good." A shocked Catholic priest once asked Brooks how she felt playing a sinner like Lulu. "Feel!" she said gaily. "I felt fine! It all seemed perfectly normal to me." She explained to him that although she herself was not a lesbian, she had many chums of that persuasion in Ziegfeld's chorus line, and added, "I knew two millionaire publishers, much like Schön in the film, who backed shows to keep themselves well supplied with Lulus.") The action moves to Peter's bedroom, where Schigolch and Rodrigo are drunkenly scattering roses over the nuptial coverlet. Lulu joins them, and something between a romp and an orgy seems imminent. It is halted by the entrance of the bridegroom. Appalled, he gropes for a gun in a nearby desk and chases the two men out of his house. The other guests, shocked and aghast, rapidly depart. When Peter returns to the bedroom, he finds Alwa with his head in Lulu's lap, urging her to run away with him. The elder Schön orders his son to leave. As soon as Alwa has left, there follows, between Kortner and Brooks, a classic demonstration of screen acting as the art of visual ellipsis. With the minimum of overt violence, a struggle for power is fought out to the death. Schön advances on Lulu, presses the gun into her hand, and begs her to commit suicide. As he grips her fingers in his, swearing to shoot her like a dog if she lacks the courage to do it herself, she seems almost hypnotized by the desperation of his grief. You would think them locked in an embrace until Lulu suddenly stiffens, a puff of smoke rises between them, and Schön slumps to the floor. Alwa bursts in and rushes to his father, from whose lips a fat thread of blood slowly trickles. The father warns Alwa that he will be the next victim. Gun in hand, Lulu stares at the body, wide-eyed and transfixed. Brooks wrote afterward that Pabst always used concrete phrases to get the emotional responses he wanted. In this case, the key image he gave her was "*das Blut*." "Not the murder of my husband," she wrote, "but the sight of the blood determined the expression on my face." What we see is not *Vénus toute entière à sa proie attachée* but a petrified child.

(3) Trial and flight: Lulu is sentenced to five years' imprisonment for manslaughter, but as the judge pronounces the sentence, her friends, led by Geschwitz, set off a fire alarm, and in the ensuing courtroom chaos she escapes. With perfect fidelity to her own willful character, Lulu, in defiance of movie cliché, comes straight back to Schön's house, where she acts like a débutante relaxing after a ball—lighting a cigarette, idly thumbing through a fashion magazine, trying out a few dance steps, opening a wardrobe and stroking a new fur coat, running a bath and immersing herself in it. Only Brooks, perhaps, could have carried off this solo sequence—so unlike the behavior expected of criminals on the run—with such ingrained conviction and such lyrical aplomb. Now Alwa arrives and is astounded to find her at the scene of the crime. The two decide to flee together to Paris. No sooner have they caught the train, however, than they are recognized by a titled pimp, who blackmails them into accompanying him aboard a gambling ship. Geschwitz, Schigolch, and the tediously beefy Rodrigo are also afloat, and for a while the film lurches into melodrama—sub-Dostoevski with a touch of ship's Chandler. Rodrigo threatens to expose Lulu unless she sleeps with him; the Countess, gritting her teeth, distracts his attention by making love to him herself—an unlikely coupling—after which she disdainfully kills him. Meanwhile, the pimp is arranging to sell Lulu to an Egyptian brothel-keeper. Anxious to save her from this fate, Alwa frenetically cheats at cards and is caught with a sleeve full of aces. The police arrive just too late to prevent Alwa, Lulu, and Schigolch from escaping in a rowboat. For the shipboard episode, Pabst cajoled Brooks, much against her will, into changing her coiffure. The spit curls disappeared; the black bangs were parted, waved, and combed back to expose her forehead. These cardinal errors of taste defaced the icon. It was as if an Italian master had painted the Virgin and left out the halo.

(4) London and catastrophe: The East End, icy and fogbound, on Christmas Eve. The Salvation Army is out in force, playing carols and distributing food to the poor. A sallow, mournfully handsome young man moves aimlessly through the crowds. He gives cash for the needy to an attractive Army girl, and gets in return a candle and a sprig of mistletoe. Posters on the walls warn the women of London against going out unescorted at night: there is a mass murderer at large. In a garret close by, its broken skylight covered by a flapping rag, Lulu lives in squalor with Alwa and Schigolch. The room is unfurnished except for a camp bed, an armchair, and a kitchen table with an oil lamp, a few pieces of chipped crockery, and a bread knife. Lulu's curls and bangs have been restored, but her clothes are threadbare: all three exiles are on the verge of starvation. Reduced by now to prostitution, Lulu ventures down into the street, where she accosts the young wanderer we have already met. He follows her up the stairs but stops halfway, as if reluctant to go farther. We see that he is holding behind his back a switchblade knife, open. Lulu proffers her hand and leans encouragingly toward him. Her smile is lambent and beckoning. Hesitantly, he ex-

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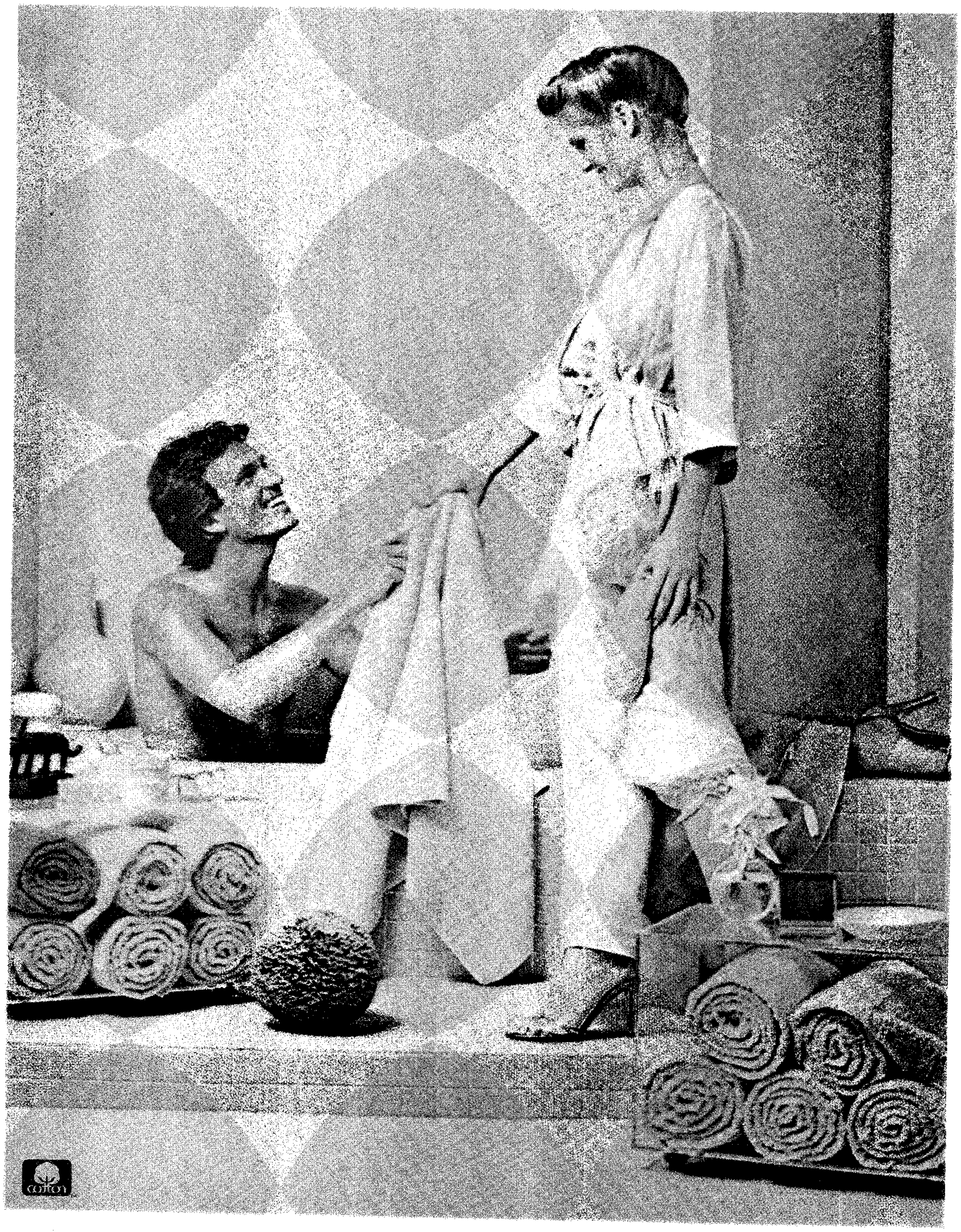

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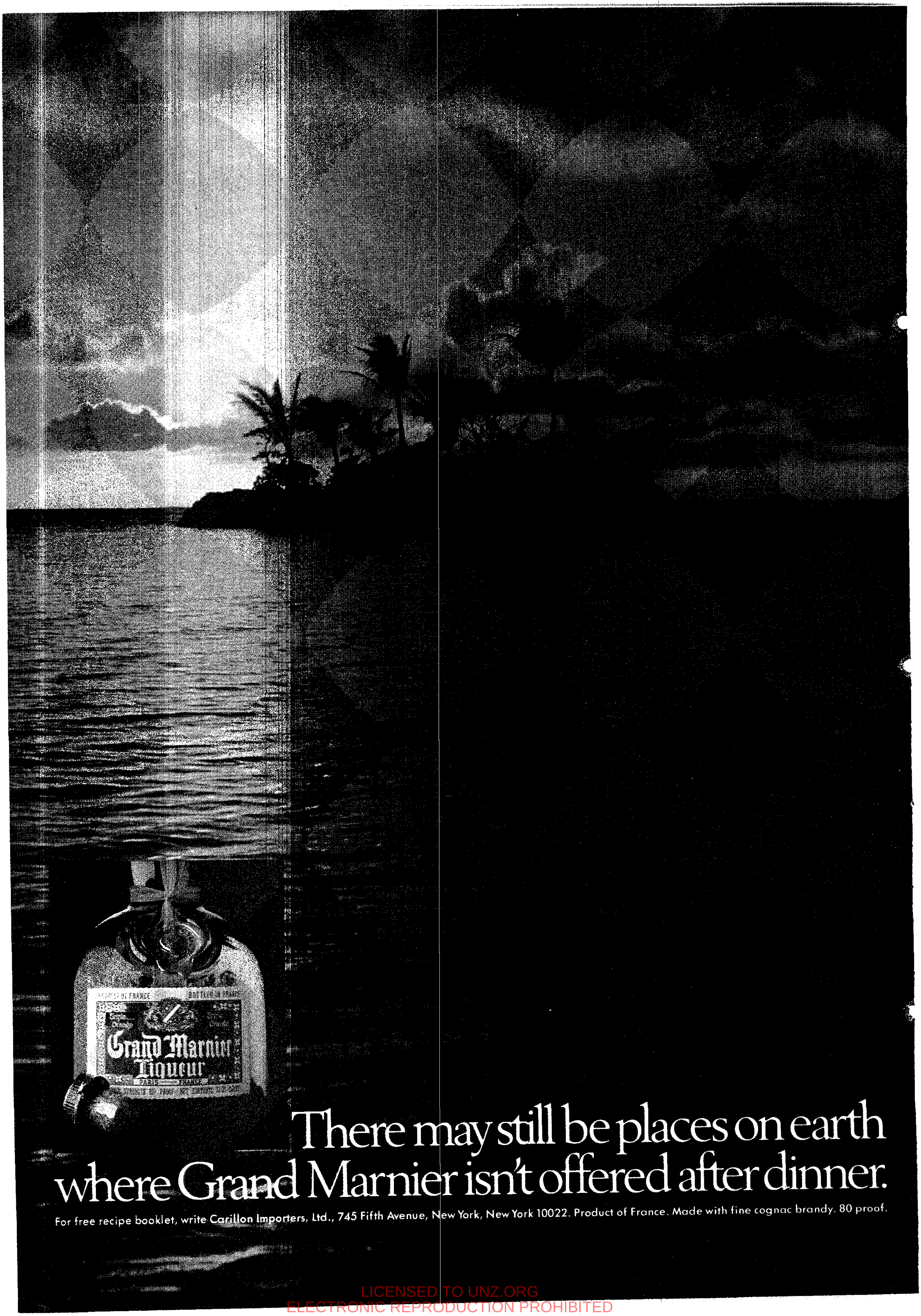
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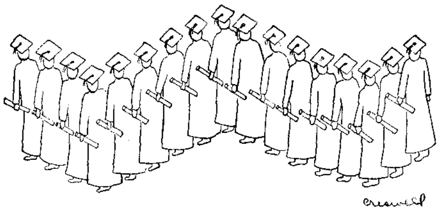
plains that he has no money. With transparent candor, she replies that it doesn't matter: she likes him. Unseen by Lulu, he releases his grip on the knife and lets it fall into the stairwell. She leads him into the attic, which Alwa and Schigolch have tactfully vacated. The scene that follows is tender, even buoyant, but unsoftened by sentimentality. The cold climax, when it comes, is necessary and inevitable. Ripper and victim relax like familiar lovers. He leans back in the armchair and stretches out his hand; she leaps onto his lap, landing with both knees bent, as weightless as a chamois. Her beauty has never looked more ripe. While they happily flirt, he allows her to pry into his pockets, from which she extracts the gifts he received from the Salvation Army. She lights the candle and places it ceremonially on the table, with the mistletoe beside it. In a deep and peaceful embrace, they survey the tableau. The Ripper then raises the mistletoe over Lulu's head and requests the traditional kiss. As she shuts her eyes and presents her lips, the candle flares up. Its gleam reflected in the bread knife on the table holds the Ripper's gaze. He can look at nothing but the shining blade. Long seconds pass as he wrestles, motionless, with his obsession. Finally, leaning forward to consummate the kiss, he grasps the handle of the knife. In the culminating shot, he is facing away from the camera. All we see of Lulu is her right hand, open on his shoulder, pressing him toward her. Suddenly, it clenches hard, then falls, limply dangling, behind his back. We fade to darkness. Nowhere in the cinema has the destruction of beauty been conveyed with more eloquent restraint. As with the killing of Peter Schön, extreme violence is implied, not shown. To paraphrase what Freddy Buache, a Swiss critic, wrote many years later, Lulu's death is in no sense God's judgment on a sinner; she has lived her life in accordance with the high moral imperatives of liberty, and stands in no need of redemption.

After the murder, the Ripper emerges from the building and hurries off into the fog. It is here, in my view, that the film should end. Instead, Pabst moves on to the forlorn figure of Alwa, who stares up at the garret before turning away to follow the Salvation Army procession out of sight. A glib anticlimax indeed; but I'm not sure that I prefer the alternative proposed by Brooks, who has said, with characteristic forthrightness, "The movie should have ended with the knife in the vagina." It may be worth adding that Gustav Diessl, who played the Ripper, was the only man in the cast whom she found sexually appealing. "We just adored each other," she has said in an interview with Richard Leacock, "and I think the final scene was the happiest in the picture. Here he is with a knife he's going to stick up into my interior, and we'd be singing and I'd be doing the Charleston. You wouldn't have known it was a tragic ending. It was more like a Christmas party." At Brooks's request, Pabst had hired a jazz pianist to play between takes, and during these syncopated interludes Brooks and Diessl would often disappear beneath the table to engage in intimate festivities of their own.

The Berlin critics, expecting Lulu to be portrayed as a monster of active depravity, had mixed feelings about Brooks. One reviewer wrote, "Louise Brooks cannot act. She does not suffer. She does nothing." Wedekind himself, however, had said of his protagonist, "Lulu is not a real character but the personification of primitive sexuality, who inspires evil unawares. She plays a purely passive role." Brooks afterward stated her own opinion of what she had achieved. "I played *Pabst's* Lulu," she said, "and she isn't a destroyer of men, like Wedekind's. She's just the same kind of nitwit that I am. Like me, she'd have been an impossible wife, sitting in bed all day reading and drinking gin." Modern critics have elected Brooks's Lulu to a secure place in the movie pantheon. David Thomson describes it as "one of the major female performances in the cinema," to be measured beside such other pinnacles as "Dietrich in the von Sternberg films, Bacall with Hawks, Karina in 'Pierrot le Fou.' " It is true that in the same list Thomson included Kim Novak in "Vertigo." It is also true that we are none of us perfect.

Day Two: My first view of the second Pabst-Brooks collaboration—"The Diary of a Lost Girl," based on "Das Tagebuch einer Verlorenen," a novel by Margarethe Boehme, and shot in the summer of 1929. After finishing "Pandora," Brooks had returned to New York and resumed her affair with the millionaire George Marshall. He told her that a new movie company, called RKO and masterminded by Joseph P. Kennedy, was anxious to sign her up for five hundred dollars a week. She replied, "I hate California and I'm not going back." Then Paramount called, ordering her to report for duty on the Coast; it was turning "The Canary Murder Case" into a talkie and required her presence for retakes and dubbing. She refused to go. Under the impression that this was a haggling posture, the studio offered ever vaster sums of money. Brooks's determination remained undented. Goaded to fury, Paramount planted in the columns a petty but damaging little story to the effect that it had been compelled to replace Brooks because her voice was unusable in talkies.



At this point—April, 1929—she received a cable from Pabst. It said that he intended to co-produce a French film entitled "Prix de Beauté," which René Clair would direct, and that they both wanted her for the lead—would she therefore cross the Atlantic as soon as possible? Such was her faith in Pabst that within two weeks she and Clair ("a very small, demure, rather fragile man" is how she afterward described him) were posing together for publicity shots in Paris. When the photographic session was over, Clair escorted her back to her hotel, where he damped her enthusiasm by revealing that he proposed to pull out of the picture forthwith. He advised her to do the same; the production money, he said, simply wasn't there, and might never be. A few days later, he officially retired from the project. (Its place in his schedule was taken by "Sous les Toits de Paris," which, together with its immediate successors—"Le Million" and "À Nous la Liberté"—established his international reputation.) With nothing to do, and a guaranteed salary of a thousand dollars a week to do it on, Brooks entrained for a spree in Antibes, accompanied by a swarm of rich admirers. When she got back to Paris, Pabst called her from Berlin. "Prix de Beauté," he said, was postponed; instead, she would star under his direction in "The Diary of a Lost Girl," at precisely half her present salary. As submissive as ever to her tutor, she arrived in Berlin aboard the next train.

Lovingly photographed by Sepp Allgeier, Brooks in "Lost Girl" is less flamboyant but not less haunting than she is in "Pandora's Box." The traffic in movie actors traditionally moved westward, from Europe to Hollywood, where their national characteristics were sedulously exploited. Brooks, who was among the few to make the eastbound trip, became in her films with Pabst completely Europeanized. To be more exact: in the context that Pabst prepared for her, Brooks's American brashness took on an awareness of transience and mortality. The theme of "Lost Girl" is the corruption of a minor—not by sexuality but by an authoritarian society that condemns sexuality. (Pabst must surely have read Wilhelm Reich, the Freudian Marxist, whose theories about the relationship between sexual and political repression were hotly debated in Berlin at the time.) It is the same society that condemns Lulu. In fact, "The Education of Lulu" would make an apt alternative title for "Lost Girl," whose heroine emerges from her travails ideally equipped for the leading role in "Pandora's Box." Her name is Thymiane Henning, and she is the sixteen-year-old daughter of a prosperous pharmacist. In the early sequences, Brooks plays her shy and faunlike, peering wide-eyed at a predatory world. She is seduced and impregnated by her father's libidinous young assistant. As soon as her condition is discovered, the double standard swings into action. The assistant retains his job; but, to save the family from dishonor, Thymiane's baby is farmed out to a wet nurse, and she herself is consigned to a home for delinquent girls, run by a bald and ghoulish superintendent and his sadistic wife.

Life in the reformatory is strictly regimented: the inmates exercise to the beat of a drum and eat to the tapping of a metronome. At length, Thymiane escapes from this archetypal hellhole (precursor of many such institutions in subsequent movies; e.g., "Mädchen in Uniform") and goes to reclaim her baby, only to find that the child has died. Broke and homeless, she meets a street vender who guides her to an address where food and shelter will be hers for the asking. Predictably, it turns out to be a brothel; far less predictably, even shockingly, Pabst presents it as a place where Thymiane is not degraded but liberated. In the whorehouse, she blossoms, becoming a *fille de joie* in the literal sense of the phrase. Unlike almost any other actress in a similar situation, Brooks neither resorts to pathos nor suggests that there is anything immoral in the pleasure she derives from her new profession. As in "Pandora," she lives for the moment, with radiant physical abandon. Present love, even for sale, hath present laughter, and what's to come is not only unsure but irrelevant. I agree with Freddy Buache when he says of Brooks's performances with Pabst that they celebrated "the victory of innocence and *amour-fou* over the debilitating wisdom imposed on society by the Church, the Fatherland, and the Family." One of her more outré clients can achieve orgasm only by watching her beat a drum. This ironic echo of life in the reform school is used by Pabst to imply that sexual prohibition breeds sexual aberration. (Even more ironically, the sequence has been censored out of most of the existing prints of the movie.) Brooks is at her best—a happy animal in skintight satin—in a party scene at a night club, where she offers herself as first prize in a raffle. "Pabst wanted realism, so we all had to drink real drinks," she said later. "I played the whole scene stewed on hot, sweet German champagne."

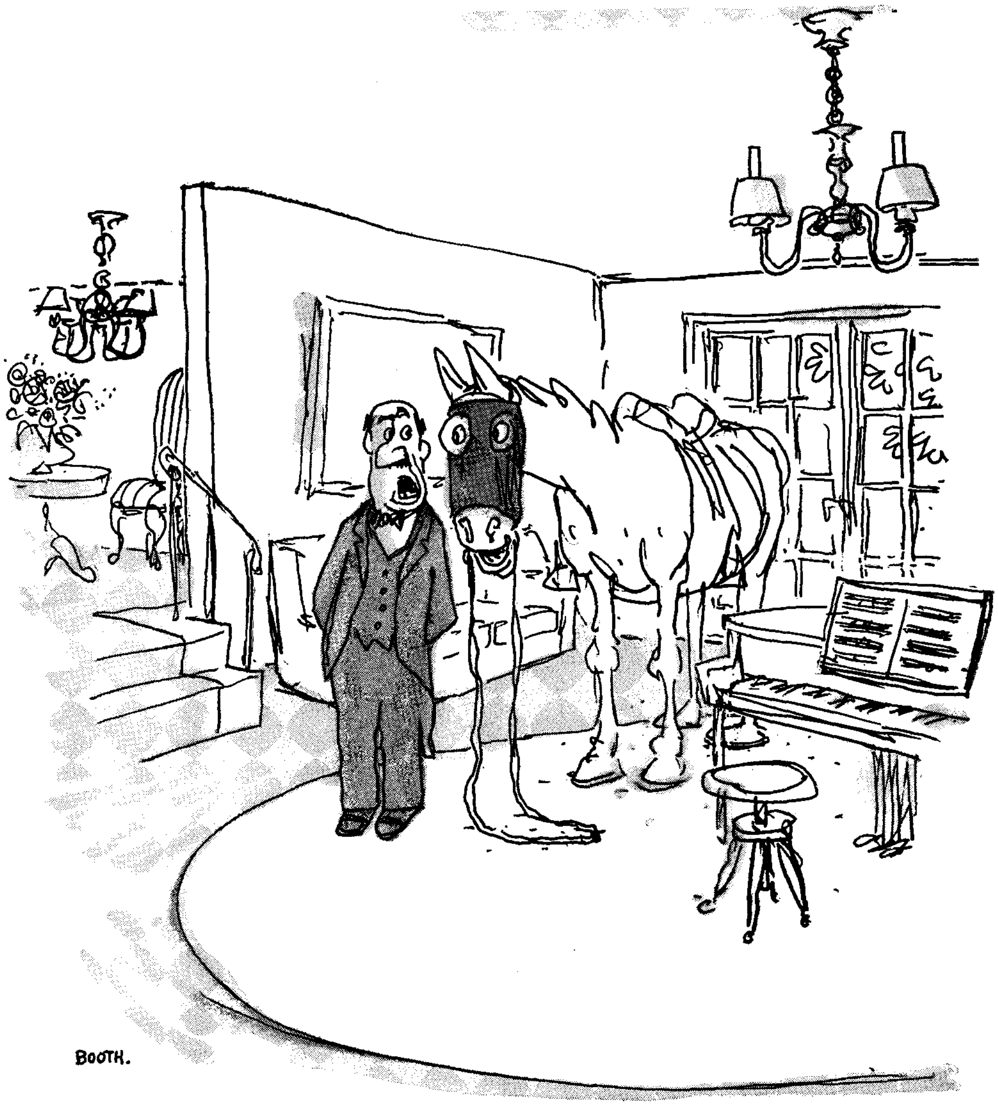
Hereabouts, unfortunately, the film begins to shed its effrontery and to pay lip service to conventional values. Thymiane catches sight of her father across the dance floor; instead of reacting with defiance—after all, he threw her out of his house—she looks stricken with guilt, like the outcast daughter of sentimental fiction. In her absence, Papa has married his housekeeper, by whom he has two children. When he dies, shortly after the night-club confrontation, he leaves his considerable wealth to Thymiane. Nobly, she gives it all to his penniless widow, so that the latter's offspring "won't have to live the same kind of life as I have." Thereby redeemed, the former whore soon becomes the wife of an elderly aristocrat. Revisiting the reform school, of which she has now been appointed a trustee, she excoriates the staff for its self-righteous cruelties. "A little more kindness," her husband adds, "and no one in the world would ever be lost." Thus lamely, the movie ends.

"Pabst seemed to lose interest," Brooks told an interviewer some years afterward. "He more or less said, 'I'm tired of this picture,' and he gave it a soft ending." His first, and much tougher, intention had been to demonstrate that humanitarianism alone could never solve society's problems. He wanted Thymiane to show her contempt for her husband's liberal platitudes by setting herself up as the madam of a whorehouse. The German distributors, however, refused to countenance such a radical dénouement, and Pabst was forced to capitulate. The result is a flawed masterpiece, with a shining central performance that even the closing, compromised sequences cannot dim. Brooks has written that during the making of the film she spent all her off-duty hours with rich revellers of whom Pabst disapproved. On the last day of shooting, "he decided to let me have it." Her friends, he said, were preventing her from becoming a serious actress, and sooner or later they would discard her like an old toy. "Your life is exactly like Lulu's, and you will end the same way," he warned her. The passage of time convinced her that Pabst had a valid point. "Lulu's story," she told a journalist, "is as near as you'll get to mine."

LAUNDRY
CHINESE LAUNDRY
R. Davidson

In August, 1929, she returned to Paris, where backing had unexpectedly been found for "Prix de Beauté," her last European movie and her first talkie—although, since she spoke no French, her voice was dubbed. The director, briefly surfacing from obscurity, was Augusto Genina, and René Clair received a credit for the original idea. Like so much of French cinema in the thirties, "Prix de Beauté" is a *film noir*, with wanly tinny music, about a shabby suburban crime of passion. Brooks plays Lucienne, a typist who enters a newspaper beauty contest. It's the kind of role with which one associates Simone Simon, though the rapture that Brooks displays when she wins, twirling with glee as she shows off her presents and trophies, goes well beyond the emotional range accessible to Mlle. Simon. Lucienne-Brooks is triumphantly unliberated; she rejoices in being a beloved, fleshly bauble, and she makes it clear to her husband, a composer employed by the prize-giving newspaper, that she wants a grander, more snobbish reward for her victory than a visit to a back-street fairground, which is all he has to offer. She leaves him and accepts a part in a film. Consumed by jealousy, he follows her one night to a projection theatre in which a rough cut of her movie is being shown. He bursts in and shoots her. As she dies, the French infatuation with irony is fearsomely indulged: her image on the screen behind her is singing the movie's theme song, "Ne Sois Pas Jaloux." In "Prix de Beauté," Brooks lends her inimitable flair and distinction to a cliché; but it is a cliché nonetheless.

At this point, when Brooks was at the height of her beauty, her career began a steep and bumpy decline. In



“He’s nuts. She’s nuts. All three young ones are nuts. The dog is nuts. And the old lady upstairs is nuts, too.”

• •

1930, she went back to Hollywood, on the strength of a promised contract with Columbia. Harry Cohn, the head of the studio, summoned her to his office for a series of meetings, at each of which he appeared naked from the waist up. Always a plain speaker, he left her in no doubt that good parts would come her way if she responded to his advances. She rebuffed them, and the proffered contract was withdrawn. Elsewhere in Hollywood, she managed to get a job in a feeble two-reel comedy pseudonymously directed by the disgraced Fatty Arbuckle; her old friend Frank Tuttle gave her a supporting role in “It Pays to Advertise” (starring Carole Lombard); and she turned up fleetingly in a Michael Curtiz picture called “God’s Gift to Women.” But the word was out that Brooks was difficult and uppity, too independent to suit the system. Admitting defeat, she returned to New York in May of 1931. Against her will, but under heavy pressure from George Marshall, her lover and would-be Svengali, she played a small part in “Louder, Please,” a featherweight comedy by Norman Krasna that began its pre-Broadway run in October. After the opening week in Jackson Heights, she was fired by the director, George Abbott. This was her farewell to the theatre; it took place on the eve of her twenty-fifth birthday.

For Brooks, as for millions of her compatriots, a long period of unemployment followed. In 1933, determined to break off her increasingly discordant relationship with Marshall, she married Deering Davis, a rich young Chicagoan, but walked out on him after six months of rapidly waning enthusiasm. With a Hungarian partner named Dario Borzani, she spent a year dancing in night clubs, including the Persian Room of the Plaza, but the monotony of cabaret routine dismayed her, and she quit the act in August, 1935. That autumn, Pabst suddenly arrived in New York and invited her to play Helen of Troy in a film version of Goethe’s “Faust,” with Greta Garbo as Gretchen. Her hopes giddily soared, only to be dashed when Garbo opted out and the project fell through. Once again, she revisited Hollywood, where Republic Pictures wanted to test her for a role in a musical called “Dancing Feet.” She was rejected in favor of a blonde who couldn’t dance. “That about did it for me,” Brooks wrote later. “From then on, it was straight downhill. And no dough to keep the wolves from the door.” In 1936, Universal cast her as the ingénue (Boots Boone) in “Empty Saddles,” a Buck Jones Western, which is the last Brooks movie in the Eastman collection. She looks perplexed, discouraged, and lacking in verve; and her coiffure, with the hair swept back from her forehead, reveals disquieting lines of worry. (Neither she nor Jones is helped by the fact that many of the major sequences of an incredibly complex plot take place at night.) The following year brought her a bit part at Paramount in something called “King of Gamblers,” after which, in her own words, “Harry Cohn gave me a personally conducted tour of hell with no return ticket.” Still wounded by her refusal to sleep with him in 1930, Cohn promised her a screen test if she would submit to the humiliation of appearing in the corps de ballet of a Grace Moore musical entitled “When You’re in Love.” To his surprise, Brooks accepted the offer—she was too broke to spurn it—and Cohn made sure that the demotion of an erstwhile star was publicized as widely as possible. Grudgingly, he gave her a perfunctory screen test, which he dismissed in two words: “It stunk.” In the summer of 1938, Republic hired Brooks to appear with John Wayne (then a minor figure) in “Overland Stage Raiders.” After this low-budget oater, she made no more pictures.

In her entire professional career, Brooks had earned, according to her own calculations, exactly $124,600—$104,500 from films, $10,100 from theatre, and $10,000 from all other sources. Not a gargantuan sum, one would think, spread over sixteen years; yet Brooks said to a friend, “I was astonished that it came to so much. But then I never paid any attention to money.” In 1940, she left Hollywood for the last time.

EASTMAN HOUSE stands in an affluent residential district of Rochester, on an avenue of comparably stately mansions, with broad, tree-shaded lawns. When my second day of séances with Brooks came to an end, I zipped up my notes in a briefcase, thanked the staff of the film department for their help, and departed in a taxi. The driver took me to an apartment building only a few blocks away, where I paid him off. I rode up in the elevator to the third floor and pressed a doorbell a few paces along the corridor. After a long pause, there was a loud snapping of locks. The door slowly opened to reveal a petite woman of fragile build, wearing a woollen bed jacket over a pink nightgown, and holding herself defiantly upright by means of a sturdy metal cane with four rubber-tipped prongs. She had salt-and-pepper hair combed back into a ponytail that hung down well below her shoulders, and she was barefoot. One could imagine this gaunt and elderly child as James Tyrone's wife in "Long Day's Journey into Night;" or, noting the touch of authority and panache in her bearing, as the capricious heroine of Jean Giraudoux's "The Madwoman of Chaillot." I stated my name, adding that I had an appointment. She nodded and beckoned me in. I greeted her with a respectful embrace. This was my first physical contact with Louise Brooks.

She was seventy-one years old, and until a few months earlier I had thought she was dead. Four decades had passed since her last picture, and it seemed improbable that she had survived such a long period of retirement. Moreover, I did not then know how young she had been at the time of her flowering. Spurred by the TV screening of "Pandora's Box" in January, 1978, I had made some inquiries, and soon discovered that she was living in Rochester, virtually bedridden with degenerative osteoarthritis of the hip, and that since 1956 she had written twenty vivid and perceptive articles, mainly for specialist film magazines, on such of her colleagues and contemporaries as Garbo, Dietrich, Keaton, Chaplin, Bogart, Fields, Lillian Gish, ZaSu Pitts, and (naturally) Pabst. Armed with this information, I wrote her a belated fan letter, to which she promptly replied. We then struck up a correspondence, conducted on her side in a bold and expressive prose style. (It matched her handwriting.) Rapport was cemented by telephone calls, which resulted in my visit to Rochester and the date I was now keeping.

She has not left her apartment since 1960, except for a few trips to the dentist and one to a doctor. (She mistrusts the medical profession, and this consultation, which took place in 1976, was her first in thirty-two years.) "You're doing a terrible thing to me," she said as she ushered me in. "I've been killing myself off for twenty years, and you're going to bring me back to life." She lives in two rooms—modest, spotless, and austerely furnished. From the larger, I remember Venetian blinds, a green sofa, a TV set, a Formica-topped table, a tiny kitchenette alcove, and flesh-pink walls sparsely hung with paintings redolent of the twenties. The other room was too small to hold more than a bed (single), a built-in cupboard bursting with press clippings and other souvenirs, a chest of drawers surmounted by a crucifix and a statue of the Virgin, and a stool piled high with books, including works by Proust, Schopenhauer, Ruskin, Ortega y Gasset, Samuel Johnson, Edmund Wilson, and many living authors of serious note. "I'm probably one of the best-read idiots in the world," my hostess said as she haltingly showed me round her domain. Although she eats little—she turns the scale at about eighty-eight pounds—she had prepared for us a perfectly mountainous omelette. Nerves, however, had robbed us of our appetites, and we barely disturbed its mighty silhouette. I produced from my briefcase a bottle of expensive red Burgundy which I had brought as a gift. (Brooks, who used to drink quite heftily, nowadays touches alcohol only on special occasions.) Since she cannot sit upright for long without discomfort, we retired with the wine to her bedroom, where she reclined, sipped, and talked, gesturing fluently, her fingers supple and unclenched. I pulled a chair up to the bedside and listened.

Her voice has the range of a dozen birdcalls, from the cry of a peacock to the fluting of a dove. Her articulation, at whatever speed, is impeccable, and her laughter soars like a kite. I cannot understand why, even if she had not been a beauty, Hollywood failed to realize what a treasure it possessed in the *sound* of Louise Brooks. Like most people who speak memorably, she is highly responsive to vocal nuances in others. She told Kevin Brownlow that her favorite actress ("the person I would be if I could be anyone") was Margaret Sullavan, mainly because of her voice, which Brooks described as "exquisite and far away, almost like an echo," and, again, as "strange, fey, mysterious—like a voice singing in the snow." My conversations with the Ravishing Hermit of Rochester were spread over several days; for the sake of convenience, I have here compressed them into one session.

She began, at my urging, by skimming through the story of her life since she last faced the Hollywood cameras: "Why did I give up the movies? I could give you seven hundred reasons, all of them true. After I made that picture with John Wayne in 1938, I stayed out on the Coast for two years, but the only people who wanted to see me were men who wanted to sleep with me. Then Walter Wanger warned me that if I hung around any longer I'd become a call girl. So I fled to Wichita, Kansas, where my family had moved in 1919. But that turned out to be another kind of hell. The citizens of Wichita either resented me for having been a success or despised me for being a failure. And I wasn't exactly enchanted with them. I opened a dance studio for young people, who loved me, because I dramatized everything so much, but it didn't make any money. In 1943, I drifted back to New York and worked for six months in radio soaps. Then I quit, for another hundred reasons, including Wounded Pride of Former Star. [Peal of laughter. Here, as throughout our chat, Brooks betrayed not the slightest trace of self-pity.] During '44 and '45, I got a couple of jobs in publicity agencies, collecting items for Winchell's column. I was fired from both of them, and I had to move from the decent little hotel where I'd been living to a grubby hole on First Avenue at Fifty-ninth Street. That was when I began to flirt with fancies related to little bottles filled with yellow sleeping pills. However, I changed my mind, and in July, 1946, the proud, snooty Louise Brooks started work as a salesgirl at Saks Fifth Avenue. They paid me forty dollars a week. I had this silly idea of proving myself 'an honest woman,' but the only effect it had was to disgust all my famous New York friends, who cut me off forever. From then on, I was regarded as a questionable East Side dame. After two years at Saks, I resigned. To earn a little money, I sat down and wrote the usual autobiography. I called it 'Naked on My Goat,' which is a quote from Goethe's 'Faust.' In one of the *Walpurgisnacht* scenes, a young witch is bragging about her looks to an old one. 'I sit here naked on my goat,' she says, 'and show my fine young body.' But the old one advises her to wait awhile: 'Though young and

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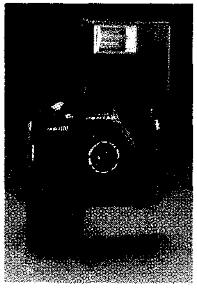

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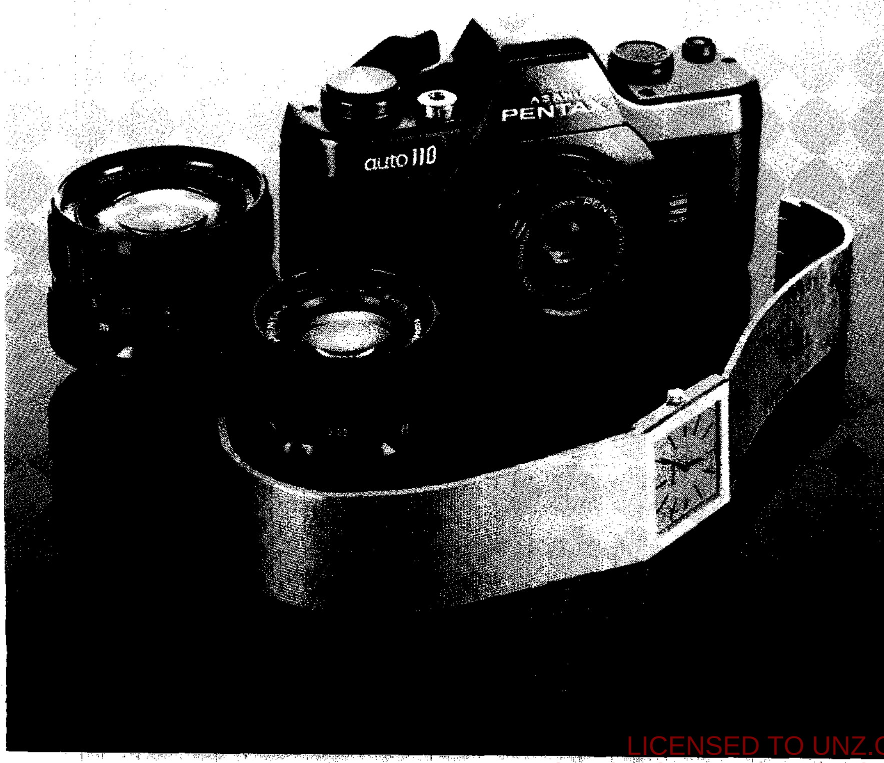

TECHNICAL DATA

Type: TTL metering 110 SLR camera, bayonet mount (80-degree setting angle).
Film: Cartridge 110 film format; ASA set automatically for film in use.
Lenses: Pentax-110 24mm f/2.8; focusing range: 0.35m to ∞. Pentax-110 50mm f/2.8 telephoto; focusing range: .9m to ∞. Pentax-110 18mm f/2.8 wide angle; focusing range: .25m to ∞.
Viewfinder: Eye-level pentaprism finder with instant-return mirror; green or yellow LEDs indicate correct handheld exposure, or need for flash/tripod.
Exposure Metering: Center-weighted, TTL metering at full aperture via SPD cell; EV Range: 3-17 (24mm f/2.8 lens; ASA 100).
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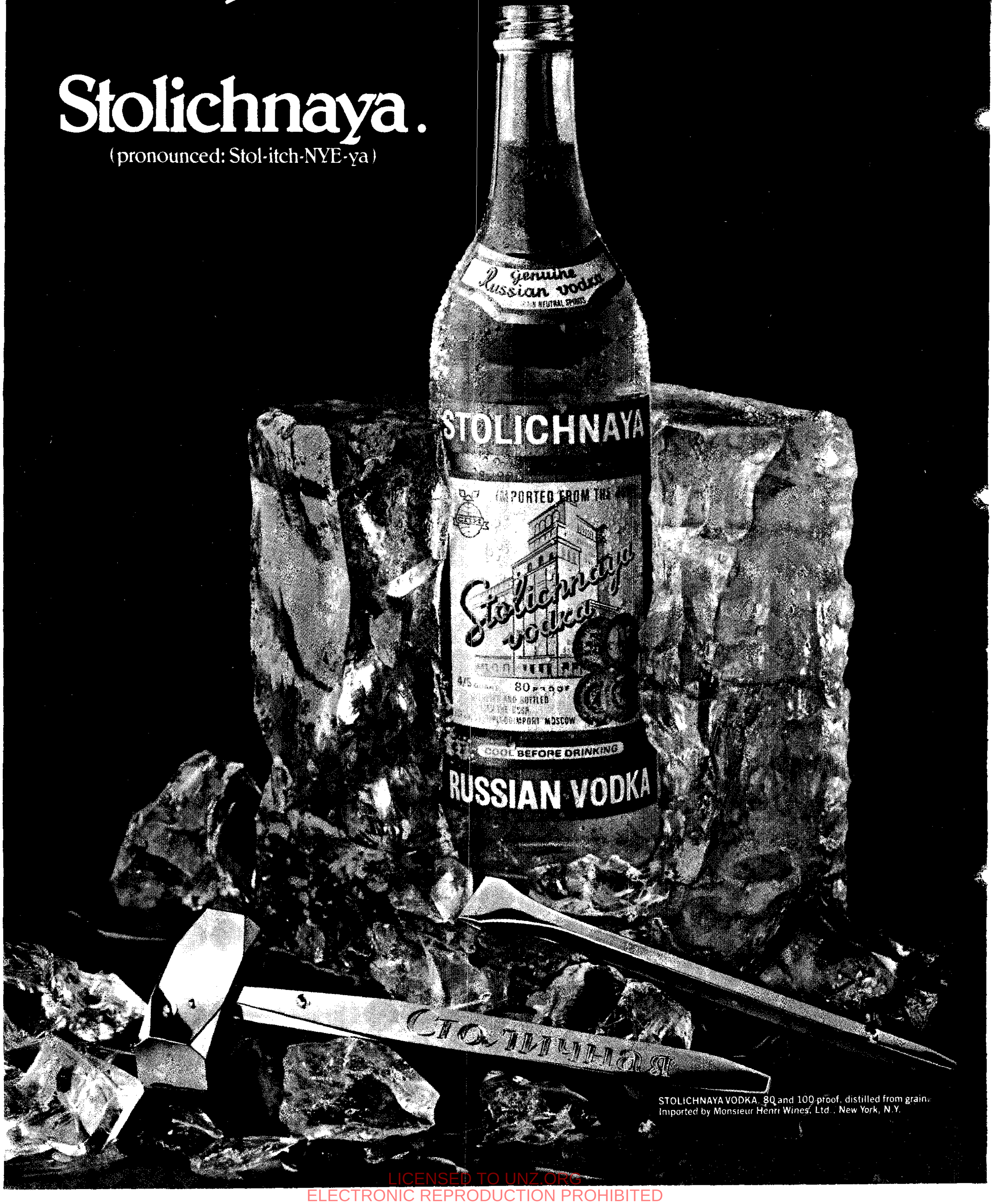
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tender now, you'll rot, we know, you'll rot.' Then, when I read what I'd written, I threw the whole thing down the incinerator."

Brooks insists that her motive for this act of destruction was *pudeur*. In 1977, she wrote an article for *Focus on Film* headed "Why I Will Never Write My Memoirs," in which she summed herself up as a prototypical Midwesterner, "born in the Bible Belt of Anglo-Saxon farmers, who prayed in the parlor and practiced incest in the barn." Although her sexual education had been conducted in Paris, London, Berlin, and New York, her pleasure was, she wrote, "restricted by the inbred shackles of sin and guilt." Her conclusion was as follows:

> In writing the history of a life I believe absolutely that the reader cannot understand the character and deeds of the subject unless he is given a basic understanding of that person's sexual loves and hates and conflicts. It is the only way the reader can make sense out of innumerable apparently senseless actions. ... We flatter ourselves when we assume that we have restored the sexual integrity which was expurgated by the Victorians. It is true that many exposés are written to shock, to excite, to make money. But in serious books characters remain as baffling, as unknowable as ever.... I too am unwilling to write the sexual truth that would make my life worth reading. I cannot unbuckle the Bible Belt.

Accepting a drop more wine, she continued the tale of her wilderness years. "Between 1948 and 1953, I suppose you could call me a kept woman," she said. "Three decent rich men looked after me. But then I was *always* a kept woman. Even when I was making a thousand dollars a week, I would always be paid for by George Marshall or someone like that. But I never had anything to show for it—no cash, no trinkets, nothing. I didn't even *like* jewelry—can you imagine? Pabst once called me a born whore, but if he was right I was a failure, with no pile of money and no comfortable mansion. I just wasn't equipped to spoil millionaires in a practical, farsighted way. I could live in the present, but otherwise everything has always been a hundred per cent wrong about me. Anyway, the three decent men took care of me. One of them owned a sheet-metal manufacturing company, and the result of that affair is that I am now the owner of the only handmade aluminum wastebasket in the world. He designed it, and it's in the living room, my solitary trophy. Then a time came, early in 1953, when my three men independently decided that they wanted to marry me. I had to escape, because I wasn't in love with them. As a matter of fact, I've never been in love. And if I *had* loved a man, could I have been faithful to him? Could he have trusted me beyond a closed door? I doubt it. It was clever of Pabst to know even before he met me that I possessed the tramp essence of Lulu."

Brooks hesitated for a moment and then went on in the same tone, lightly self-mocking, "Maybe I should have been a writer's moll. Because when we were talking on the phone, a few Sundays ago, some secret compartment inside me burst, and I was suddenly overpowered by the feeling of love—a sensation I'd never experienced with any other man. Are you a variation of Jack the Ripper, who finally brings me love that I'm prevented from accepting—not by the knife but by old age? You're a perfect scoundrel, turning up like this and wrecking my golden years! [I was too stunned to offer any comment on this, but not too stunned to note, with a distinct glow of pride, that Brooks was completely sober.] Anyhow, to get back to my three suitors, I decided that the only way to avoid marriage was to become a Catholic, so that I could tell them that in the eyes of the Church I was still married to Eddie Sutherland. I went to the rectory of a Catholic church on the East Side, and everything was fine until my sweet, pure religious instructor fell in love with me. I was the first woman he'd ever known who acted like one and treated him like a man. The other priests were furious. They sent him off to California and replaced him with a stern young missionary. After a while, however, even *he* began to hint that it would be a good idea if he dropped by my apartment in the evenings to give me special instruction. But I resisted temptation, and in September, 1953, I was baptized a Catholic."

Having paused to light a cigarette, which provoked a mild coughing spasm, Brooks resumed her story. "I almost forgot a strange incident that happened in 1952. Out of the blue, I got a letter from a woman who had been a Cherryvale neighbor of ours. She enclosed some snapshots. One of them showed a nice-looking gray-haired man of about fifty holding the hand of a little girl—me. On the back she'd written, 'This is Mr. Feathers, an old bachelor who loved kids. He was always taking you to the picture show and buying you toys and candy.' That picture brought back something I'd blacked out of my mind for—what?—

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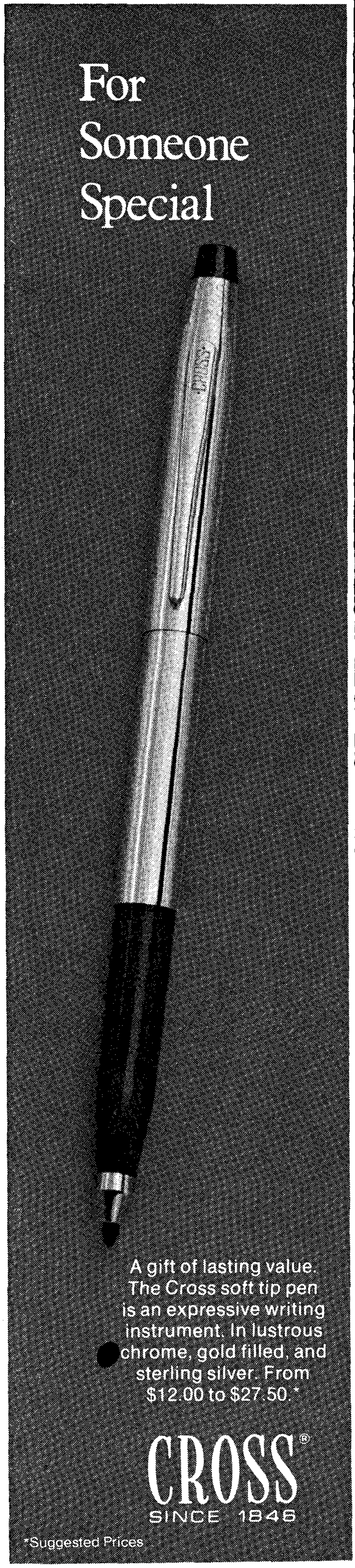

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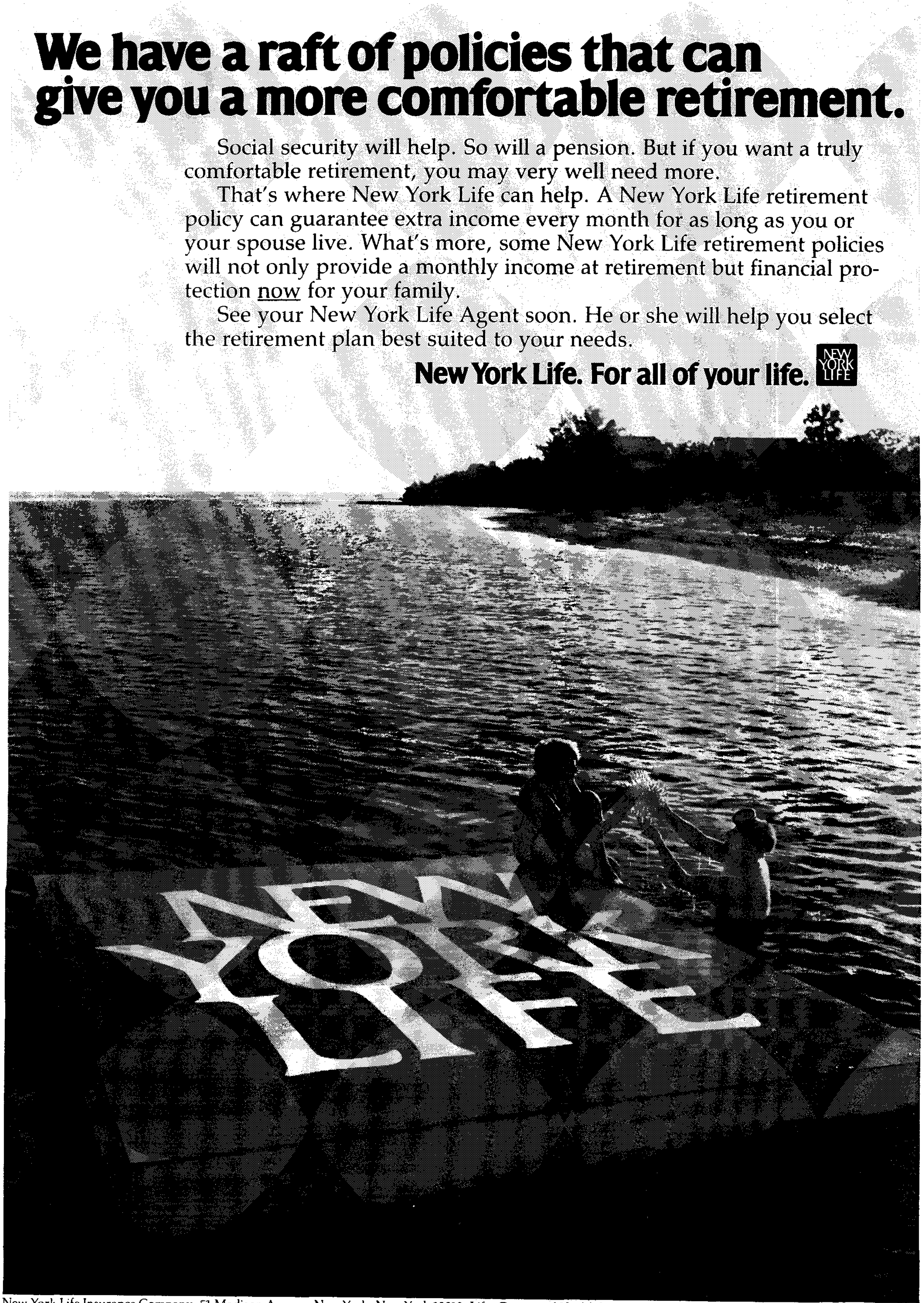
thirty-seven years. When I was nine years old, Mr. Feathers molested me sexually. Which forged another link between me and Lulu: when *she* had *her* first lover, she was very young, and Schigolch, the man in question, was middle-aged. I've often wondered what effect Mr. Feathers had on my life. He must have had a great deal to do with forming my attitude toward sexual pleasure. For me, nice, soft, easy men were never enough—there had to be an element of domination—and I'm sure that's all tied up with Mr. Feathers. The pleasure of kissing and being kissed comes from somewhere entirely different, psychologically as well as physically. Incidentally, I told my mother about Mr. Feathers, and—would you believe it? [Peal of laughter.] She blamed *me!* She said I must have led him on. It's always the same, isn't *it?*" And Brooks ran on in this vein, discussing her sex life openly and jauntily, unbuckling one more notch of the Bible Belt with every sentence she uttered.

The year 1954 was Brooks's nadir. "I was too proud to be a call girl. There was no point in throwing myself into the East River, because I could swim; and I couldn't afford the alternative, which was sleeping pills." In 1955, just perceptibly, things began to look up, and life became once more a tolerable option. Henri Langlois, the exuberant ruler of the Cinémathèque Française, organized in Paris a huge exhibition entitled "Sixty Years of Cinema." Dominating the entrance hall of the Musée d'Art Moderne were two gigantic blowups, one of the French actress Falconetti in Carl Dreyer's 1928 classic, "La Passion de Jeanne d'Arc," and the other of Brooks in "Pandora's Box." When a critic demanded to know why he had preferred this nonentity to authentic stars like Garbo and Dietrich, Langlois exploded, "There is no Garbo! There is no Dietrich! There is only Louise Brooks!" In the same year, a group of her friends from the twenties clubbed together to provide a small annuity that would keep her from outright destitution; and she was visited in her Manhattan retreat by James Card, then the curator of film at Eastman House. He had long admired her movies, and he persuaded her to come to Rochester, where so much of her best work was preserved. It was at his suggestion that, in 1956, she settled there.

"Rochester seemed as good a place as any," she told me. "It was cheaper than New York, and I didn't run the risk of meeting people from my past. Up to that time, I had never seen any of my films. And I still haven't—not right through, that is. Jimmy Card screened some of them for me, but that was during my drinking period. I would watch through glazed eyes for about five minutes and sleep through the rest. I haven't even seen 'Pandora.' I've been present on two occasions when it was being run, but I was drunk both times. By that I mean I was *navigating* but not *seeing*." When she watched other people's movies, however, she felt no need for alcoholic sedation. As a working actress, she had never taken films seriously; under Card's tuition, she recognized that the cinema was a valid form of art, and began to develop her own theories about it. In 1956, drawing on her powers of near-total recall, she wrote a study of Pabst for *Image*. This was the first of a sheaf of articles, sharp-eyed and idiosyncratic, that she has contributed over the years to such magazines as *Sight & Sound* (London), *Objectif* (Montreal), *Film Culture* (New York), and *Positif* (Paris).

The Brooks cult burgeoned in 1957, when Henri Langlois crossed the Atlantic to meet her. A year later, he presented "Hommage à Louise Brooks"—a festival of her movies that filled the Cinémathèque. The star herself flew to Paris, all expenses paid, and was greeted with wild acclaim at a reception after the Cinémathèque's showing of "Pandora's Box." (Among those present was Jean-Luc Godard, who paid his own tribute to Brooks in 1962, when he directed "Vivre Sa Vie," the heroine of which—a prostitute—was played by Anna Karina in an exact replica of the Brooks hairdo. Godard described the character as "a young and pretty Parisian shopgirl who gives her body but retains her soul.") In January, 1960, Brooks went to New York and attended a screening of "Prix de Beauté" in the Kaufmann Concert Hall of the 92nd Street Y, where she made a hilarious little speech that delighted the packed audience. The next day, she returned to Rochester, from which she has never since emerged.

Interviewers and fans occasionally call on her, but for the most part, as she put it to me, "I have lived in virtual isolation, with an audience con-



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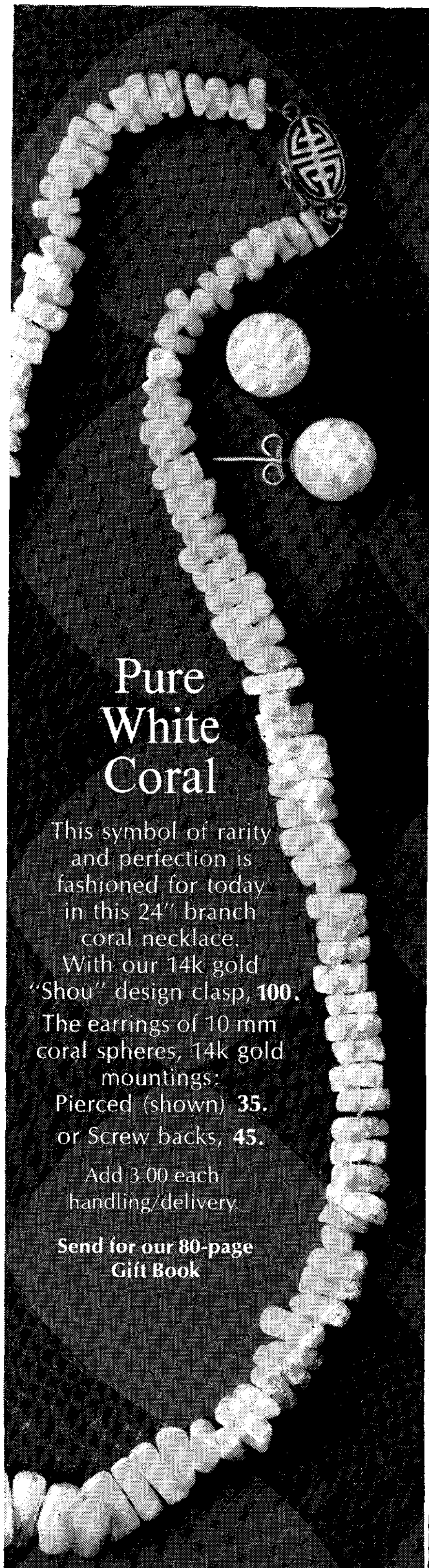

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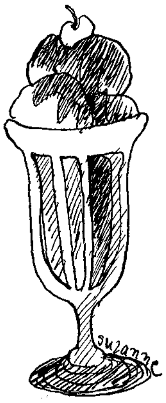
sisting of the milkman and a cleaning woman." She continued, "Once a week, I would drink a pint of gin, and would become what Dickens called 'gincoherent,' go to sleep, and drowse for four days. That left three days to read, write a bit, and see the odd visitor. No priests, by the way—I said goodbye to the Church in 1964. Now and then, there would be a letter to answer. In 1965, for instance, an Italian artist named Guido Crepax started a very sexy and tremendously popular comic strip about a girl called Valentina, who looked exactly like me as Lulu. In fact, she *identified* herself with me. Crepax wrote to thank me for the inspiration and said he regarded me as a twentieth-century myth. I appreciated the tribute and told him that at last I felt I could disintegrate happily in bed with my books, gin, cigarettes, coffee, bread, cheese, and apricot jam. During the sixties, arthritis started to get a grip, and in 1972 I had to buy a medical cane in order to move around. Then, five years ago, the disease really walloped me. My pioneer blood did not pulse through my veins, rousing me to fight it. I collapsed. I took a terrible fall and nearly smashed my hip. That was the end of the booze or any other kind of escape for me. I knew I was in for a bad time, with nothing to face but the absolute meaninglessness of my life. All I've done since then is try to hold the pieces together. And to keep my little squirrel-cage brain distracted."

As an emblematic figure of the twenties, epitomizing the flappers, jazz babies, and dancing daughters of the boom years, Brooks has few rivals, living or dead. Moreover, she is unique among such figures in that her career took her to all the places—New York, London, Hollywood, Paris, and Berlin—where the action was at its height, where experiments in pleasure were conducted with the same zeal (and often by the same people) as experiments in the arts. From her bedroom cupboard Brooks produced an avalanche of manila envelopes, each bulging with mementoes of her halcyon decade. This solitary autodidact, her perceptions deepened by years of immersion in books, looked back for my benefit on the green, gregarious girl she once was, and found much to amuse her. For every photograph she supplied a spoken caption. As she reminisced, I often thought of those Max Beerbohm cartoons that depict the Old Self conversing with the Young Self.



"Here I am in 1922, when I first hit New York, and the label of 'beautiful but dumb' was slapped on me forever. Most beautiful-but-dumb girls think they are smart, and get away with it, because other people, on the whole, aren't much smarter. You can see modern equivalents of those girls on any TV talk show. But there's also a very small group of beautiful women who *know* they're dumb, and this makes them defenseless and vulnerable. They become the Big Joke. I didn't know Marilyn Monroe, but I'm sure that her agonizing awareness of her own stupidity was one of the things that killed her. I became the Big Joke, first on Broadway and then in Hollywood. . . . That's Herman Mankiewicz—an ideal talk-show guest, don't you think, born before his time? In 1925, Herman was trying to educate me, and he invented the Louise Brooks Literary Society. A girl named Dorothy Knapp and I were Ziegfeld's two prize beauties. We had a big dressing room on the fifth floor of the New Amsterdam Theatre building, and people like Walter Wanger and Gilbert Miller would meet there, ostensibly to hear my reviews of books that Herman gave me to read. What they actually came for was to watch Dorothy doing a striptease in front of a full-length mirror. I get some consolation from the fact that, as an idiot, I have provided delight in my time to a very select group of intellectuals. . . . That must be Joseph Schenck. Acting on behalf of his brother Nick, who controlled M-G-M, Joe offered me a contract in 1925 at three hundred a week. Instead, I went to Paramount for two hundred and fifty. Maybe I should have signed with M-G-M and joined what I called the Joe Schenck Mink Club. You could recognize the members at '21' because they never removed their mink coats at lunch. . . . Here's Fritzi LaVerne, smothered in osprey feathers. I roomed with her briefly when we were in the 'Follies' together, and she seduced more 'Follies' girls than Ziegfeld and William Randolph Hearst combined. That's how I got the reputation of being a lesbian. I had nothing against it in principle, and for years I thought it was fun to encourage the idea. I used to hold hands with Fritzi in public. She had a little Bulgarian boyfriend who was just our height, and we would get into his suits and camp all over New

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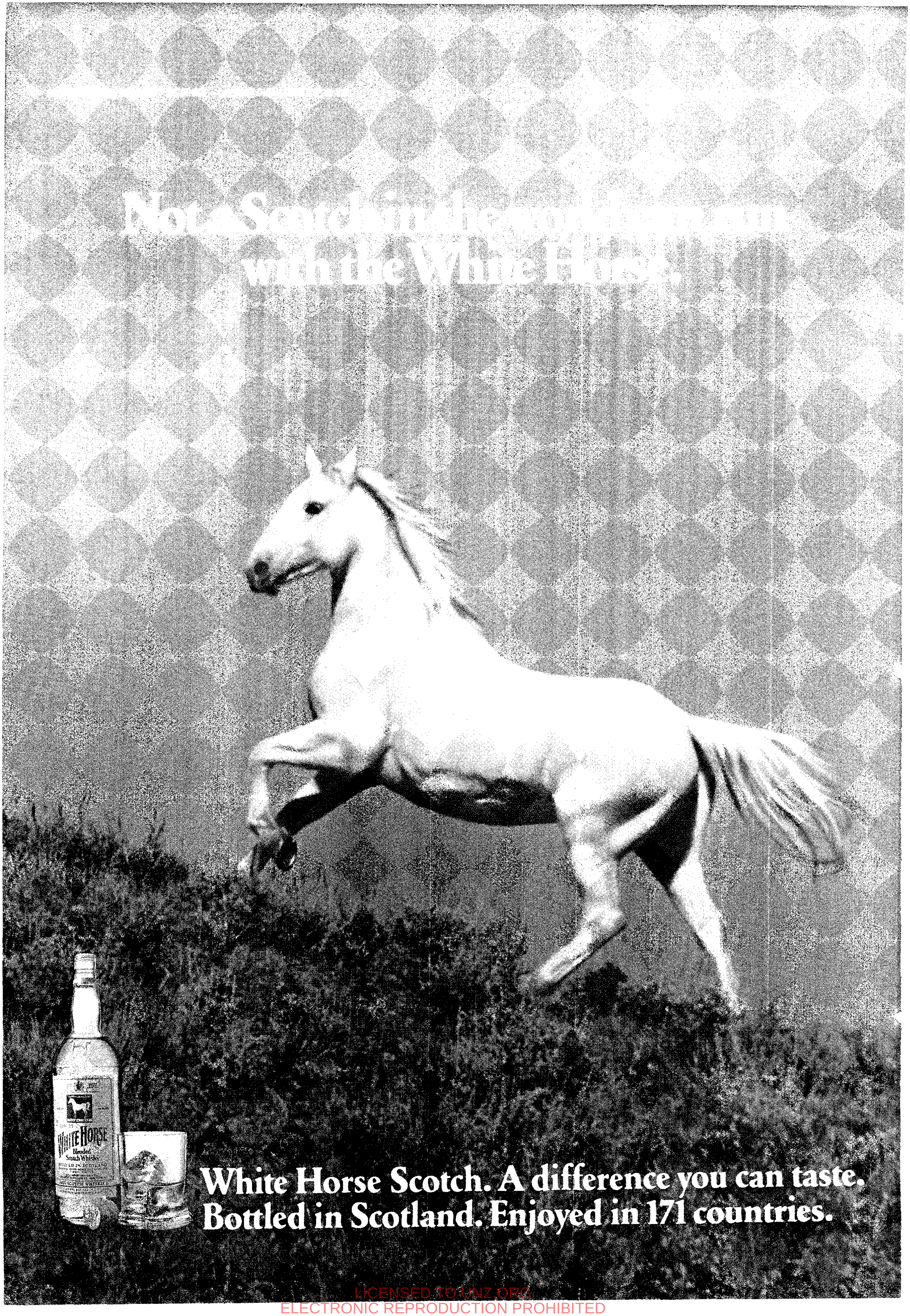
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York. Even when I moved out to Yahoo City, California, I could never stop by a lesbian household without being asked to strip and join the happy group baring their operation scars in the sun. But I only loved men's bodies. What maddens me is that because of the lesbian scenes with Alice Roberts in 'Pandora' I shall probably go down in film history as one of the gloomy dikes. A friend of mine once said to me, 'Louise Brooks, you're not a lesbian, you're a pansy.' Would you care to decipher that? By the way, are you getting tired of hearing my name? I'm thinking of changing it. I noticed that there were five people called Brooks in last week's *Variety*. How about June Caprice? Or Louise Lovely?"

d. ehrenberg

I shook my head.

Brooks continued riffling through her collection. "This, of course, is Martha Graham, whose genius I absorbed to the bone during the years we danced together on tour. She had rages, you know, that struck like lightning out of nowhere. One evening when we were waiting to go onstage—I was sixteen—she grabbed me, shook me ferociously, and shouted, 'Why do you ruin your feet by wearing those tight shoes?' Another time, she was sitting sweetly at the makeup shelf pinning flowers in her hair when she suddenly seized a bottle of body makeup and exploded it against the mirror. She looked at the shattered remains for a spell, then moved her makeup along to an unbroken mirror and went on quietly pinning flowers in her hair. Reminds me of the night when Buster Keaton drove me in his roadster out to Culver City, where he had a bungalow on the back lot of M-G-M. The walls of the living room were covered with great glass bookcases. Buster, who wasn't drunk, opened the door, turned on the lights, and picked up a baseball bat. Then, walking calmly round the room, he smashed every pane of glass in every bookcase. Such frustration in that little body! . . . Here, inevitably, are Scott and Zelda. I met them in January, 1927, at the Ambassador Hotel in L.A. They were sitting close together on a sofa, like a comedy team, and the first thing that struck me was how *small* they were. I had come to see the genius writer, but what dominated the room was the blazing intelligence of Zelda's profile. It shocked me. It was the profile of a witch. Incidentally, I've been reading Scott's letters, and I've spotted a curious thing about them. In the early days, before Hemingway was famous, Scott always spelled his name wrong, with two 'm's. And when did he start to spell it right? At the precise moment when Hemingway became a bigger star than he was. . . . This is a pool party at somebody's house in Malibu. I know I knock the studio system, but if you were to ask me what it was like to live in Hollywood in the twenties I'd have to say that we were all—oh!—marvelously degenerate and happy. We were a world of our own, and outsiders didn't intrude. People tell you that the reason a lot of actors left Hollywood when sound came in was that their voices were wrong for talkies. That's the official story. The truth is that the coming of sound meant the end of the all-night parties. With talkies, you couldn't stay out till sunrise anymore. You had to rush back from the studios and start learning your lines, ready for the next day's shooting at 8 A.M. That was when the studio machine really took over. It controlled you, mind and body, from the moment you were yanked out of bed at dawn until the publicity department put you back to bed at night."

Brooks paused, silently contemplating revels that ended half a century ago, and then went on. "Talking about bed, here's Tallulah—although I always guessed that she wasn't as keen on bed as everyone thought. And my record for guessing things like that was pretty good. I watched her getting ready for a meeting with a plutocratic boyfriend of hers at the Elysée Hotel. She forgot to wear the emerald ring he'd given her a few days before, but she didn't forget the script of the play she wanted him to produce for her. Her preparations weren't scheming or whorish. Just businesslike. . . . This is a bunch of the guests at Mr. Hearst's ranch, sometime in 1928. The girl with the dark hair and the big smile is Pepi Lederer, one of my dearest friends. She was Marion Davies' niece and the sister of Charlie Lederer, the screenwriter, and she was only seventeen when that picture was taken. My first husband, Eddie Sutherland, used to say that for people who didn't worship opulence, weren't crazy about meeting celebrities, or didn't need money or advancement from Mr. Hearst, San Simeon was a deadly-dull place. I suppose he was right. But when Pepi was there

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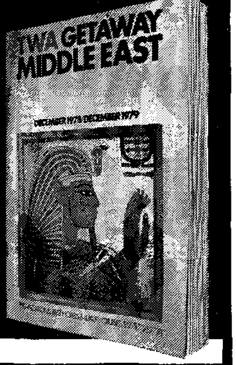

it was always fun. She created a world of excitement and inspiration wherever she went. And I never entered that great dining hall without a shiver of delight. There were medieval banners from Siena floating overhead, and a vast Gothic fireplace, and a long refectory table seating forty. Marion and Mr. Hearst sat with the important guests at the middle of the table. Down at the bottom, Pepi ruled over a group—including me—that she called the Younger Degenerates, and that's where the laughter was. Although Mr. Hearst disapproved of booze, Pepi had made friends with one of the waiters, and we got all the champagne we wanted. She could have been a gifted writer, and for a while she worked for Mr. Hearst's de-luxe quarterly *The Connoisseur*, but it was only a courtesy job. Nobody took her seriously, she never learned discipline, and drink and drugs got her in the end. In 1935, she died by jumping out of a window in the psychiatric ward of a hospital in Los Angeles. She was twenty-five years old. Not long ago, I came across her name in the index of a book on Marion Davies, and it broke my heart. Then I remembered a quotation from Goethe that I'd once typed out. I've written it under the photo: 'For a person remains of consequence not so far as he leaves something behind him but so far as he acts and enjoys, and rouses others to action and enjoyment.' That was Pepi."

Of all the names that spilled out of Brooks's memories of America in the twenties, there was one for which she reserved a special veneration: that of Chaplin. In an article for the magazine *Film Culture*, she had described his performances at private parties:

> He recalled his youth with comic pantomimes. He acted out countless scenes for countless films. And he did imitations of everybody. Isadora Duncan danced in a storm of toilet paper. John Barrymore picked his nose and brooded over Hamlet's soliloquy. A Follies girl swished across the room and I began to cry while Charlie denied absolutely that he was imitating me. Nevertheless . . . I determined to abandon that silly walk forthwith.

For me, she filled out the picture. "I was eighteen in 1925, when Chaplin came to New York for the opening of 'The Gold Rush.' He was just twice my age, and I had an affair with him for two happy summer months. Ever since he died, my mind has gone back fifty years, trying to define that lovely being from another world. He was not only the creator of the Little Fellow, though that was miracle enough. He was a self-made aristocrat. He taught himself to speak cultivated English, and he kept a dictionary in the bathroom at his hotel so that he could learn a new word every morning. While he dressed, he prepared his script for the day, which was intended to adorn his private portrait of himself as a perfect English gentleman. He was also a sophisticated lover, who had affairs with Peggy Hopkins Joyce and Marion Davies and Pola Negri, and he was a brilliant businessman, who owned his films and demanded fifty per cent of the gross—which drove Joe Schenck wild, along with all the other people who were plotting to rob him. Do you know, I can't once remember him *still*? He was always standing up as he sat down, and going out as he came in. Except when he turned off the lights and went to sleep, without liquor or pills, like a child. Meaning to be bitchy, Herman Mankiewicz said, 'People never sat at *his* feet. He went to where people were sitting and stood in front of them.' But how we paid attention! We were hypnotized by the beauty and inexhaustible originality of this glistening creature. He's the only genius I ever knew who spread himself equally over his art and his life. He loved showing off in fine clothes and elegant phrases—even in the witness box. When Lita Grey divorced him, she put about vile rumors that he had a depraved passion for little girls. He didn't give a damn, even though people said his career would be wrecked. It still infuriates me that he never defended himself against any of those ugly lies, but the truth is that he existed on a plane above pride, jealousy, or hate. I never heard him say a snide thing about anyone. *He lived totally without fear.* He knew that Lita Grey and her family were living in his house in Beverly Hills, planning to ruin him, yet he was radiantly carefree—happy with the success of 'The Gold Rush' and with the admirers who swarmed around him. Not that he *exacted* adoration. Even during our affair, he knew that I didn't adore him in the romantic sense, and he didn't mind at all. Which brings me to one of the dirtiest lies he allowed to be told about him—that he was mean with money. People forget that Chaplin was the only star ever to keep his ex-leading lady [Edna Purviance] on his payroll for life, and the only producer to pay his employees their full salaries even when he wasn't in production. When our joyful summer ended, he didn't give me a fur from Jaeckel or a bangle from Cartier, so that I could flash them around, saying,

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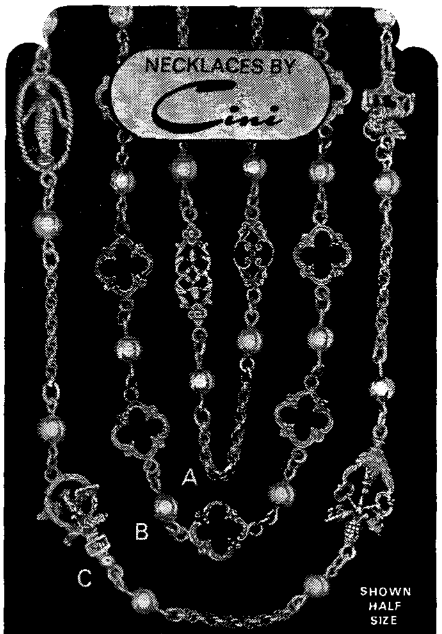

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'Look what I got from Chaplin.' The day after he left town, I got a nice check in the mail, signed Charlie. And then I didn't even write him a thank-you note. Damn me."

Brooks's souvenirs of Europe, later in the twenties, began with pictures of a burly, handsome, dark-haired man, usually alighting from a train: George Preston Marshall, the millionaire who was her frequent bedfellow and constant adviser between 1927 and 1933. "If you care about 'Pandora's Box,' you should be grateful to George Marshall," she told me. "I'd never heard of Mr. Pabst when he offered me the part. It was George who insisted that I should accept it. He was passionately fond of the theatre and films, and he slept with every pretty show-business girl he could find, including all my best friends. George took me to Berlin with his English valet, who stepped off the train blind drunk and fell flat on his face at Mr. Pabst's feet."

The Brooks collection contains no keepsakes of the actress whom she pipped at the post in the race to play Lulu, and of whom, when I raised the subject, she spoke less than charitably. "Dietrich? That *contraption!* She was one of the beautiful-but-dumb girls, like me, but she belonged to the category of those who thought they were smart and fooled other people into believing it. But I guess I'm just being insanely jealous, because I know she's a friend of yours—isn't she?" By way of making amends, she praised Dietrich's performance as Lola in "The Blue Angel," and then, struck by a sudden thought, interrupted herself: "Hey! Why don't I ask Marlene to come over from Paris? We could work on our memoirs together. Better still, she could write mine, and I hers—'Lulu' by Lola, and 'Lola' by Lulu." To put it politely, however, Dietrich does not correspond to Brooks's ideal image of a movie goddess. But who does—apart from Margaret Sullavan, whose voice, as we know, she reveres? A few months after our Rochester encounter, she sent me a letter that disclosed another, unexpected object of her admiration. In it she said:

> I've just been listening to Toronto radio. There was a press conference with Ava Gardner, who is making a movie in Montreal. Her beauty has never excited me, and I have seen only one of her films, "The Night of the Iguana," in which she played a passive role that revealed her power of stillness but little else. On radio, sitting in a hotel room, triggered by all the old stock questions, she said nothing new or stirring—just "Sinatra could be very nice or very rotten—get me another drink, baby—I made fifty-four pictures and the only part I understood was in 'The Snows of Kilimanjaro.'..." In her conversation, there was nothing about great acting or beauty or sex, and no trace of philosophical or intellectual concern. Yet for the first time in my life I was proud of being a movie actress, unmixed with theatre art. *Ava is in essence what I think a movie* star should be—a beautiful person with a unique, mysterious personality unpolluted by Hollywood. And she is so *strong.* She did not have to run away (like Garbo) to keep from being turned into a product of the machine.... What I should like to know is whether, as I sometimes fancy, I ever had a glimmer of that quality of integrity which makes Ava shine with her own light.

The next picture out of the manila envelopes showed Brooks, inscrutable and somewhat forlorn in a sequined evening gown, sitting at a table surrounded by men with pencil-thin mustaches who were wearing tuxedos, black ties, and wing collars. These men were all jabbering into telephones and laughing maniacally. None of them were looking at Brooks. Behind them I could make out oak-panelled walls and an out-of-focus waiter with a fish-eyed stare and a strong resemblance to Louis Jouvet. "You know where that was taken, of course," Brooks said.

I was sorry, but I didn't.

"That's Joe Zelli's!" she cried. "Zelli's was the most famous night club in Paris. I can't remember all the men's names, but the one on the extreme right used to drink ether. The one on my left was half Swedish and half English. I lived with him in several hotels. Although he was very young, he had snow-white hair, so we always called him the Eskimo. The fellow next to him, poor guy, was killed the very next day. He was cut to pieces by a speedboat propeller at Cannes."

Whenever I think of the twenties, I shall see that flashlit hysterical tableau at Zelli's and the unsmiling seraph at the center of it.

From the fattest of all her files, Brooks now pulled out a two-shot. *Beaming in a cloche hat, she stands* arm in arm with a stocky, self-possessed man in a homburg. He also wears steel-rimmed glasses, a bow tie, and a well-cut business suit; you would guess he was in his early forties. "Mr. Pabst," she said simply. "That was 1928, in Berlin, while we were making 'Pandora's Box.' As I told you, I arrived with George Marshall, and Mr. Pabst hated him, because he kept me up all night, going round the clubs. A few weeks later, George went back to the States, and after that Mr. Pabst locked

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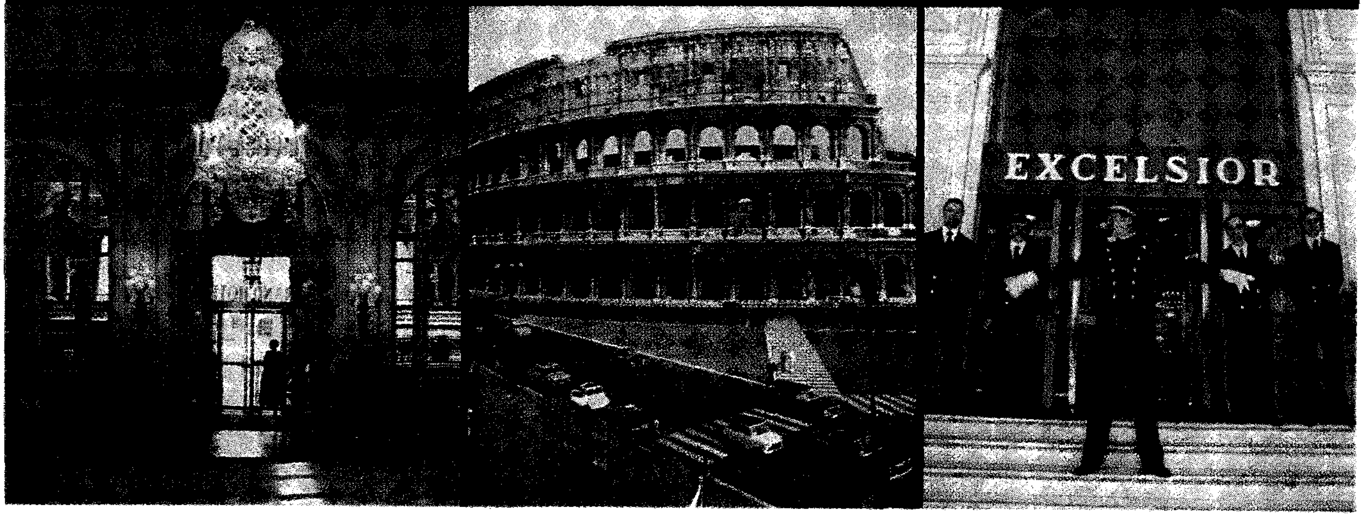

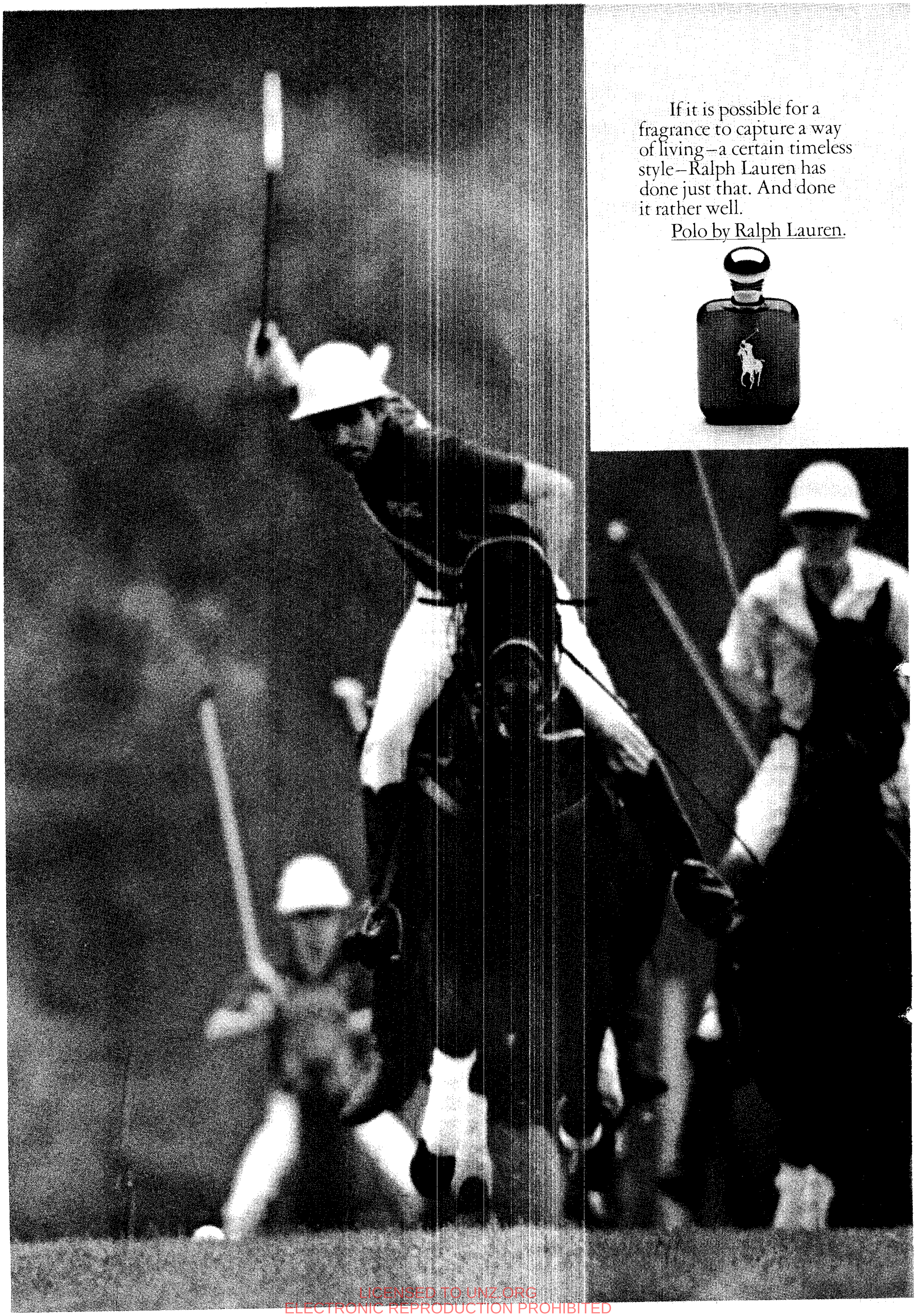

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me up in my hotel when the day's shooting was finished. Everyone thought he was in love with me. On the rare evenings when I went to his apartment for dinner, his wife, Trudi, would walk out and bang the door. Mr. Pabst was a highly respectable man, but he had the most extraordinary collection of obscene stills in the world. He even had one of Sarah Bernhardt nude with a black-lace fan. Did you know that in the twenties it was the custom for European actresses to send naked pictures of themselves to movie directors? He had all of them. Anyway, I didn't have an affair with him in Berlin. In 1929, though, when he was in Paris trying to set up 'Prix de Beauté,' we went out to dinner at a restaurant and I behaved rather outrageously. For some reason, I slapped a close friend of mine across the face with a bouquet of roses. Mr. Pabst was horrified. He hustled me out of the place and took me back to my hotel, where—what do I do? I'm in a *terrific* mood, so I decide to banish his disgust by giving the best sexual performance of my career. I jump into the hay and deliver myself to him body and soul. [Her voice is jubilant.] He acted as if he'd never experienced such a thing in his life. You know how men want to pin medals on themselves when they excite you? They get positively radiant. Next morning, Mr. Pabst was so pleased he couldn't see straight. That was why he postponed 'Prix de Beauté' and arranged to make 'The Diary of a Lost Girl' first. He wanted the affair to continue. But I didn't, and when I got to Berlin it was like 'Pandora's Box' all over again, except that this time the man I brought with me was the Eskimo—my white-headed boy from Zelli's."

Brooks laughed softly, recalling the scene. "Mr. Pabst was there at the station to meet me. He was appalled when I got off the train with the Eskimo. On top of that, I had a wart on my neck, and Esky had just slammed the compartment door on my finger. Mr. Pabst took one stark look at me, told me I had to start work the next morning, and dragged me away to a doctor, who burned off the wart. If you study the early sequences of 'Lost Girl,' you can see the sticking plaster on my neck. I hated to hurt Mr. Pabst's feelings with the Eskimo, but I simply could not bring myself to repeat that one and only night. The irony, which Mr. Pabst never knew, was that although Esky and I shared a hotel suite in Berlin, we didn't sleep together until much later, when 'Lost Girl' was finished and we were spending a few days in Paris. 'Eskimo,' I said to him the evening before we parted, 'this is the night.' And it was—another first and last for Brooks."

MORE fragments of Brooksiana:

I: Do you think there are countries that produce particularly good lovers?

BROOKS: Englishmen are the best. And priest-ridden Irishmen are the worst.

I: What are your favorite films?

BROOKS: "An American in Paris," "Pygmalion," and "The Wizard of Oz." Please don't be disappointed.

I: They're all visions of wish fulfillment. An American at large with a *gamine* young dancer in a fantasy playground called Paris. A Cockney flower girl who becomes the toast of upper-class London. And a child from your home state who discovers, at the end of a trip to a magic world, that happiness was where she started out.

BROOKS: You *are* disappointed.

I: Not a bit. They're first-rate movies, and they're all aspects of you.

POSTSCRIPT from a letter Brooks wrote to me before we met: "Can you give me a reason for sitting here in this bed, going crazy, with not one god-damned excuse for living?" I came up with more than one reason; viz., (a) to receive the homage of those who cherish the images she has left on celluloid, (b) to bestow the pleasure of her conversation on those who seek her company, (c) to appease her hunger for gleaning wisdom from books, and (d) to test the truth of a remark she had made to a friend: "The Spanish philosopher Ortega y Gasset once said, 'We are all lost creatures.' It is only when we admit this that we have a chance of finding ourselves."

DESPITE the numerous men who have crossed the trajectory of her life, Brooks has pursued her own course. She has flown solo. The price to be paid for such individual autonomy is, inevitably, loneliness, and her loneliness is prefigured in one of the most penetrating comments she has ever committed to print: "The great art of films does not consist in descriptive movement of face and body, but in the movements of thought and soul transmitted in a kind of intense isolation."

AS I rose to leave her apartment, she gave me a present: a large and handsome volume entitled "Louise

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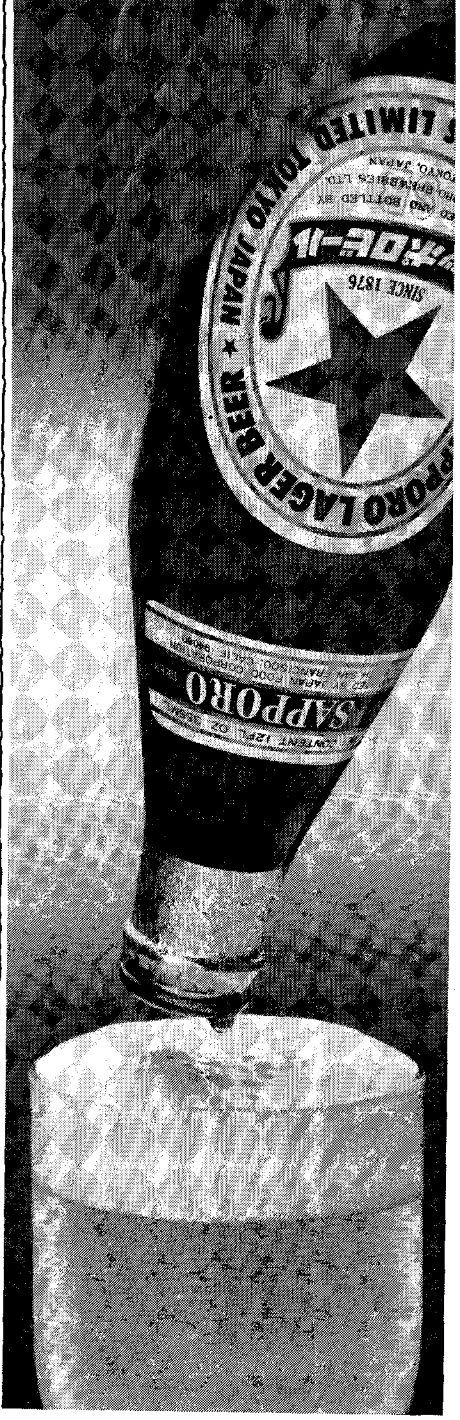

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Brooks—Portrait d'une Anti-Star." Published in Paris in 1977, it contained a full pictorial survey of her career, together with essays, critiques, and poems devoted to her beauty and talent. She inscribed it to me, and copied out, beneath her signature, the epitaph she has composed for herself: "I never gave away anything without wishing I had kept it; nor kept anything without wishing I had given it away." The book included an account by Brooks of her family background, which I paused to read. It ended with this paragraph, here reproduced from her original English text:

> Over the years I suffered poverty and rejection and came to believe that my mother had formed me for a freedom that was unattainable, a delusion. Then . . . I was . . . confined to this small apartment in this alien city of Rochester. . . . Looking about, I saw millions of old people in my situation, wailing like lost puppies because they were alone and had no one to talk to. But they had become enslaved by habits which bound their lives to warm bodies that talked. I was free! Although my mother had ceased to be a warm body in 1944, she had not forsaken me. She comforts me with every book I read. Once again I am five, leaning on her shoulder, learning the words as she reads aloud "Alice in Wonderland."

She insisted on getting out of bed to escort me to the door. We had been talking earlier of Proust, and she had mentioned his maxim that the future could never be predicted from the past. Out of her past, I thought, in all its bizarre variety, who knows what future she may invent? "Another thing about Proust," she said, resting on her cane in the doorway. "No matter how he dresses his characters up in their social disguises, we always know how they look naked." As we know it, I reflected, in Brooks's performances.

I kissed her goodbye, buttoned up my social disguise—for it was a chilly evening—and joined the other dressed-up people on the streets of Rochester.

—KENNETH TYNAN

•

Mr. Real teaches Southern fiction at Lynchburg College and writes frequently on the arts and politics for curious journals.—*Richmond (Va.) News Leader.*

Better than not getting published at all.

•

THE GOOD OLD DAYS

[*Headline in the Times, March 3, 1979*]

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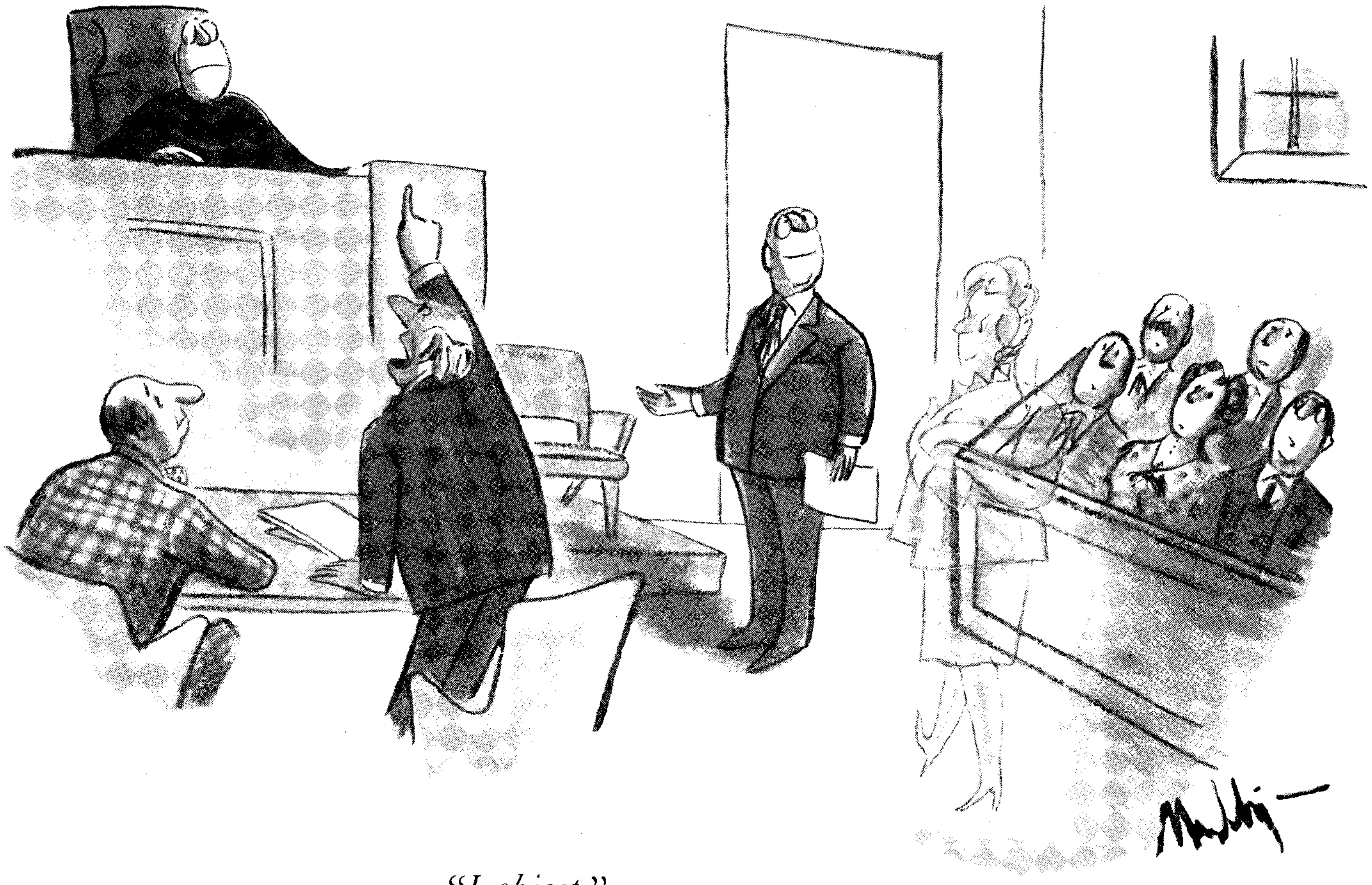
THE THEATRE

Family Tyrannies

"I Remember Mama" has proved to be one of the most durable literary properties of our time. Having begun as a book of memoirs by Kathryn Forbes ("Mama's Bank Account"), it was turned into a play and then into a movie and a TV soap opera, and now it has come to the Majestic as a musical. There's an aesthetic rule of thumb to the effect that imitations diminish in value as they increase in number and in chronological distance from the originals; Miss Forbes' memoirs may well have possessed some authentic family feeling, but in their present form they amount to show-biz trash of a conventionally venal nature. Nothing in the musical rings true except an unspoken yearning by everyone concerned with it to score a big Broadway hit. The character who serves as the heroine of this imprudent aspiration is a tireless, mindless mother, equal in plausibility to the saintly oleograph known as the Baroness von Trapp, in "The Sound of Music." A Norwegian immigrant, married to a monosyllabic ship's carpenter, she helps to support a large household of simpering children by taking in the laundry of the grandees on Nob Hill, in San Francisco in the days just before the First World War. These are the specific facts about her; it soon turns out that she is a synthesis of every indomitable mother that has been smarmily crooned over in song and story since the earliest family tyrannies began, in the green savannahs of Ur; she is Whistler's Mother and Mother Machree, and her victories, however selfish, are always achieved in the name of helping others.

The practiced makers of "I Remember Mama"—the book is by Thomas Meehan, the music is by Richard Rodgers, and the lyrics are by Martin Charnin and Raymond Jessel—must know as well as the rest of us that one cannot make a successful musical out of marzipan and stamped tin, and I will speak here only of what strikes me as the most mysterious of their errors: the harsh, old-fashioned targets of their humor. We are invited to laugh at the plight of a frustrated virgin of forty-three, still in pursuit of a husband and family; we are also invited to consider it hilarious that the husband in question is short, cowardly, Swedish, Methodist, and an undertaker. One tasteless joke after another is devoted to his person and profession. Many of these jokes are instigated by a certain Uncle Chris, who is a coarse and drunken bully and is yet apparently intended to keep us in stitches all evening long, not least by teaching a tiny grandniece to pipe repeatedly, "God damn it to hell." On his deathbed, he sourly rebukes a mourner for being ugly and roars his pleasure at leaving not a penny to the members of his needy family. As a confirmed atheist, at the very moment of dying he booms out a song entitled "It's Going to Be Good to Be Gone." Talk about tasteless!

To my mind, Liv Ullmann is a movie actress, fascinating to watch in closeup; I don't find her fascinating when she walks across a stage, or when she attempts to sing and dance. At such times, she is good-looking, hard-working, and unpersuasive. That gifted man George S. Irving has the unlucky task of playing Uncle Chris; George Hearn plays the carpenter husband upon whose native obtuseness the hinge of plot rustily, squeakily turns; and Armin Shimerman plays the wretched little undertaker. The handsome setting—the interior of an ample Victorian house on Steiner Street which today would bring around three hundred thousand dollars—is by David Mitchell, the pretty costumes are by Theoni V. Aldredge, and the dances, such as they are, have been choreographed by Danny Daniels. The show has been directed with pedestrian low spirits by Cy Feuer. —Brendan Gill



"I object."

U.S. JOURNAL: FAIRHOPE, ALA.

CONTROL

WHEN Claire Oaks came to Fairhope to be city librarian, in the summer of 1977, she was under the impression that Fairhope was not at all typical of Alabama towns—a natural enough impression, considering that the founder of the library, Marie Howland, was a nineteenth-century freethinker who had lived for a time in the coöperative rooming house of a New York free-love advocate, had written a novel considered too sexually outspoken for the Boston Public Library, and had begun the Fairhope collection with books she hauled back from a utopian community of *crédit foncier* zealots in Topolobampo, Mexico. That is not, after all, the sort of library history that one might expect to find in Opelika or Eufaula. Fairhope, a pleasant town of about six thousand people on the eastern shore of Mobile Bay, was founded as a utopian community itself. An Iowa populist named E. B. Gaston, inspired first by the utopian Socialism of Edward Bellamy and then by Henry George's theory that poverty could be eliminated if no one was allowed to profit from the ownership of land, led some colonists to Alabama in 1894 to form a community modelled on the principles of "coöperative individualism." Fairhope was dominated by the followers of Henry George—known as single taxers, because George believed that land alone should be taxed—but the settlement soon developed a reputation as a place tolerant of just about any viewpoint, and a single taxer who wanted to argue economics or politics did not ordinarily lack for someone to take the other side. Early in the century, Marietta Johnson, a teacher who became a national figure in progressive-education circles, founded in Fairhope the School of Organic Education, which drew people from the North who had an interest in noncompetitive learning—and in passing a winter on Mobile Bay. "Writers, artists, and craftsmen found the atmosphere congenial," the historian Paul Gaston, grandson of Fairhope's founder, wrote recently, in discussing a book he is doing on the Fairhope colony. "Mavericks of various sorts, from the beginning, expressed strong opinions on how life ought to be lived, what was most healthful to eat, what forms of dress (or undress) were most natural, and how individuals ought to relate to each other and to their environment."

As the driving time between Fairhope and Mobile was cut, first by a causeway and eventually by an interstate, the town became known less as a refuge for freethinkers than as a bedroom community for commuters. It had always attracted some retired people, and in the seventies, after it was praised in a book called "Safe Places: East," they became a significant percentage of the population. The Single Tax Corporation still owns a lot of the land in and around Fairhope, although some people who lease farmland from it are now lobbying in the state capital to have it dissolved. These days, no one thinks of the Single Tax Corporation as a model for changing the economic system in America. To the extent that the people who run it are committed to practicing Georgism instead of simply maintaining control, they would presumably emphasize George's free-enterprise views on the value of individual initiative rather than his radical notions about eliminating poverty. Only one city councilman, a retired Fairhope banker named Henry Bishop, is from a single-tax family—his full name is Henry George Bishop—but he is not a member of the Sin-

Dana Fradon

"He's got a noble brow, but a fat lot of good it's done him."

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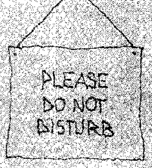
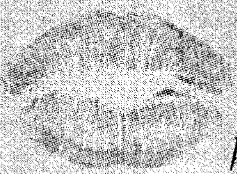
'Cara,' he said.



GARNIER
AMARETTO
DI AMORE
Liqueur

'Si,' she answered. 'Baciami,' he said.



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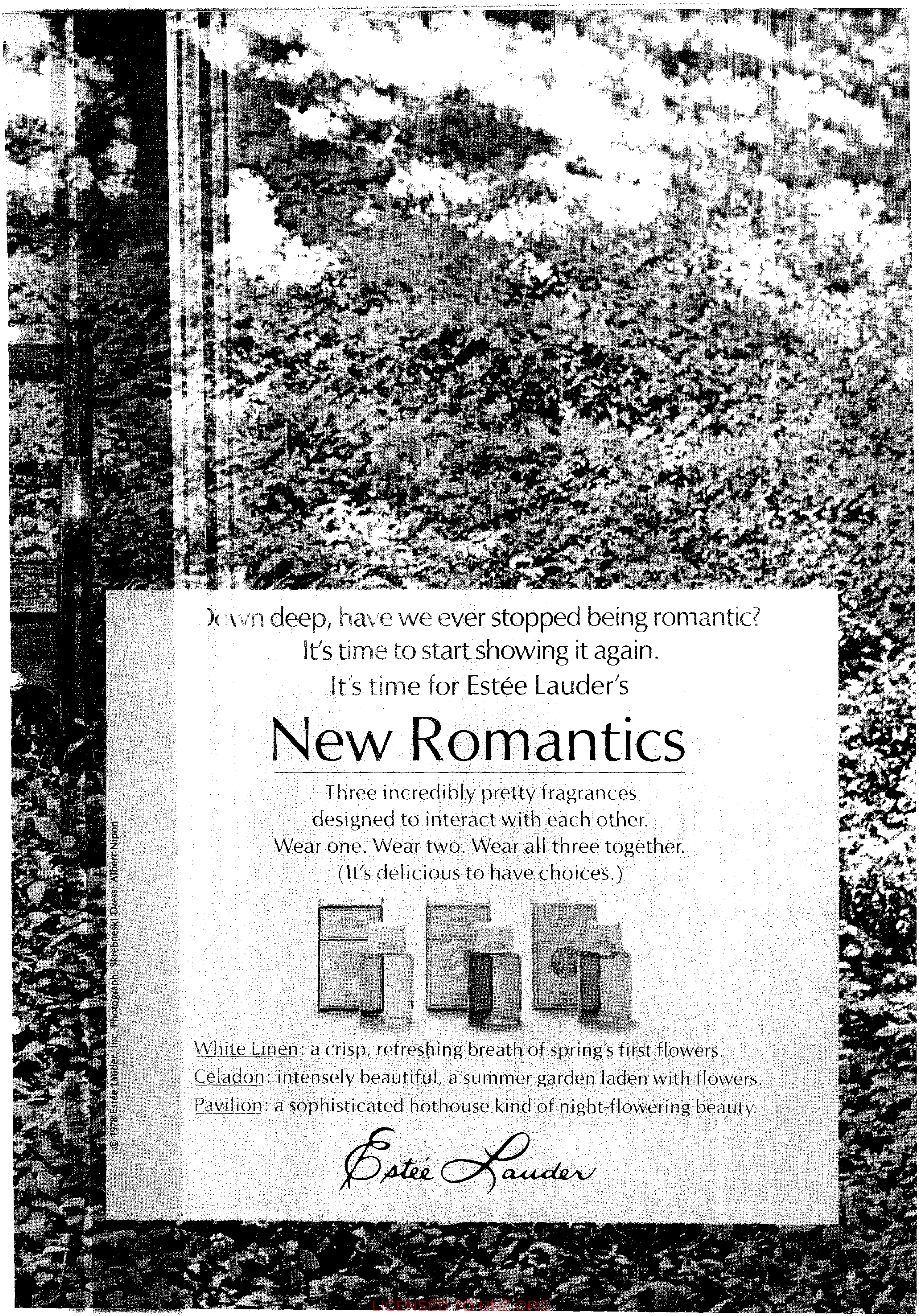

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LARK NEVER FORGOT

gle Tax Corporation. The mayor of Fairhope, James Nix, used to work for a paper company in Mobile and now has some holdings that include the local roller rink; he is not the sort of man who is likely to be found discussing utopian economics rather than the economics involved in keeping city taxes low. The Mayor and the city council tend to look on the Single Tax Corporation simply as an exceptionally large landowner. The Organic School still exists, but not as the sort of place that excites discussion among world leaders in progressive education. For a while after the desegregation of the Fairhope public schools, it was not easily distinguishable from a seg academy. ("I don't know about no folk dancing," a parent of that period is said to have told a teacher of one traditional Organic School subject. "I just don't want my boy going to school with niggers.") The library was turned over to the city by the Single Tax Corporation in the mid-sixties. Newcomers from the North are sometimes discussed in Fairhope the way they would be discussed in any small Sun Belt town with a growing attraction for retired people. ("They're *so* smart. They come down here and tell us how they did things in Ohio or New Jersey. Or *Michigan!* Someone left the *gate* open in Michigan.") Fairhope, Mayor Nix said recently, is "like any other town."

Still, Fairhope's background can be felt. Its bayfront, unlike the bayfront along most of the eastern shore, is still accessible to the public, in keeping with the Iowa colonists' views on land. There are streets named after single-tax heroes, like Joseph Fels, the soap manufacturer and Georgist benefactor, who provided early financing for the Fairhope library. There is also in Fairhope a thin but resilient link to its founding days as a place that valued the exchange of ideas. Because of the echoes of its past, it has attracted a number of retired people whose backgrounds are academic or artistic. ("I won't say 'pseudo-intellectuals,'" an Alabamian who has lived in Fairhope for many years said recently of these newcomers. "But that's what I mean.") A small art colony still exists. A men's coffee club still meets weekly to chew over whatever is on anyone's mind, and the gathering often includes a retired law-school dean and a couple of artists years away from retirement and a member of a single-tax family who attended the Henry Wallace convention.

The Fairhope library has attracted large crowds to its Tuesday lecture-and-book-review series for years. Its board, when Claire Oaks took over as librarian, included newcomers from other parts of the country as well as Olive (Piney) Wood Gaston, the daughter-in-law of E. B. Gaston himself—a woman in her eighties who, in the old Fairhope manner, writes poetry and until recently rarely let a warm day pass without taking a long swim in Mobile Bay. There was good reason, in other words, for Miss Oaks to arrive under the impression that Fairhope was still the sort of place that valued intellectual contention and had room for independent women in the tradition of Marie Howland and Marietta Johnson. As it happened, Miss Oaks, a businesslike young woman from Mississippi, was an independent sort herself. Before entering the University of Alabama for her master's degree in library science, she had spent six years as the librarian of a school for Exxon employees in Aruba. At Alabama, in the year before she came to Fairhope, the book that influenced her most was not "Safe Places: East" or a text on the Dewey decimal system but "Women in the Field," an anthropologists' discussion of ways in which a woman researcher on her own can fall under the control of local authorities or of the people she is studying.

PARTLY because the subject of Claire Oaks's first meeting with Mayor Nix, shortly after her arrival, was the presence in the library of two books a few citizens found offensive—"The Joy of Sex" and "More Joy of Sex"—some people in Fairhope still believe that the trouble between them began with what librarians call "a right-to-read issue." It is true that the Mayor called the complaints to the librarian's attention—he may even have done so in a way that sounded like a demand to remove them from the shelves—and it is true that the librarian reacted stiffly by presenting the formal procedures through which such matters could be brought before the library board for consideration. But both books are still available in the library, almost two years later—or would be if people didn't persist in walking off with them. Perhaps the Mayor would have been pleased if Miss Oaks, instead of lecturing him on proper procedures, had merely agreed to remove the books, but even Miss Oaks believes his pleasure would have come more from her acquiescence than from the removal of the books. There are not many small-town mayors, after all, who are more interested in what books

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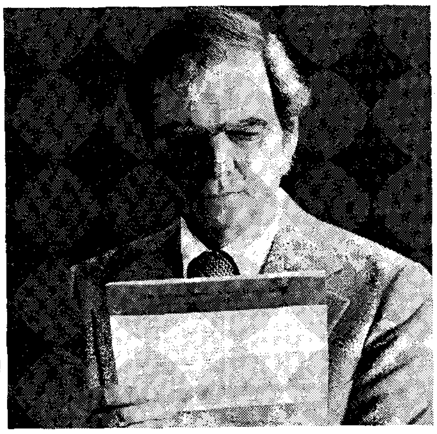

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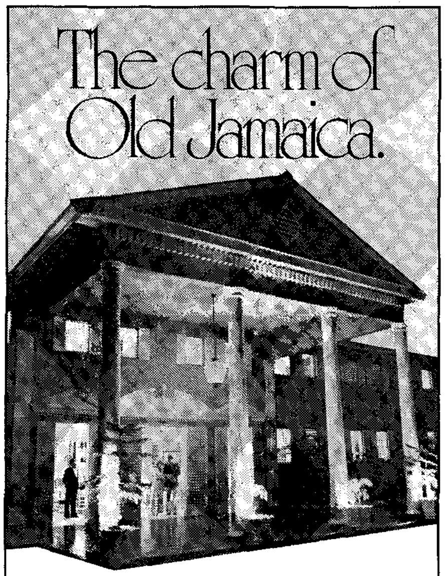
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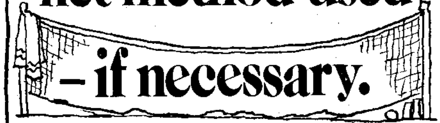
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a library keeps than in who maintains authority over the library.

Although the librarian of Fairhope is an employee of the library board rather than of the city council, Claire Oaks's predecessor, Fairhope's first professionally trained librarian, used to, in the words of Henry Bishop, "hotfoot it to the Mayor every time she had a little problem." She was in her early twenties when she took the job, and she is often described around Fairhope as "kittenish." Depending on the point of view, either she was controlled by the Mayor and the city council or she got what she wanted for the library by thanking people in a nice way and choosing some opportune moments to burst into tears. "All of us felt we had adopted her," Henry Bishop said recently. "This one we couldn't adopt. She's not the kind who lets anyone adopt her." Adoption—treating the woman as a child—is one of the "initial protection" devices that "Women in the Field" warns of. Claire Oaks did not allow herself to be adopted by the city council or smothered with help by the library volunteers or enveloped by the town's prominent families. She maintained her independence for almost two years, until the city council fired her.

OFFICIALLY, the city council of Fairhope controls the library through the appointment of the library board and the approval of a library budget. Once it became obvious that Claire Oaks was not the sort to be adopted, the councilmen naturally tended to fill openings on the board with people more likely to agree with them than with her. Although Miss Oaks may have seen sinister implications in the appointment of a local Baptist minister to the board just after the discussion about "The Joy of Sex," the Mayor found it perfectly natural. "It's silly to have a board not carrying out the wishes of the people who were elected by the people," he said recently. This spring, the Mayor announced a further refinement in his efforts to make the library board more accountable to the voters. The term of the board's chairman, who also happened to be the swing vote giving the supporters of the librarian a majority, was drawing to a close, and the Mayor said she would be replaced by a city councilman.

The announcement came after seven or eight months of bitter controversy. The council had refused to approve a budget with the increases the librarian and her board had asked for, and she, according to the Mayor, "wouldn't take no for an answer." A petition favoring the new budget was presented to the city council. A resolution in support of the librarian was passed by the library board. For a while, the library board closed the library on Wednesdays, and posted a sign on the door saying that the closing was necessary as an economy measure. Miss Oaks posted a sign above the "New Books" shelf that said "We regret that, beginning November 1, fewer books and periodicals will be ordered. This will be necessary in order for the Library to operate on its current budget." During the winter, Miss Oaks used her "Library Lines" column in the *Eastern Shore Courier* to warn library visitors about the advisability of dressing warmly. "Patrons complain of a constant breeze in the reading room, and working in the library's workroom becomes a flirtation with pneumonia," she wrote. "One bright note to this otherwise dismal story is that some of our librarians are becoming masters at the fine art of filing catalog cards while wearing gloves!"

The Mayor was furious, and said so. "I told her she could write what she wants, but if there's something wrong with the heat in the library I don't want to read about it in the paper," he said not long ago. "The paper can't fix it." The column is sometimes spoken of in Fairhope as the last straw, but so is a speech Miss Oaks made a couple of months earlier at the Rotary Club—a speech that included mention of the library building's shortcomings. It was all, in her view, a legitimate attempt to pressure the city council into giving the library more money. In the view of her lawyer, it was "precisely the kind of free debate on public policy the First Amendment was meant to protect." To the Mayor and the city council, it was mouthing off—what the Mayor recently called "trying to do things to agitate the city." Attempts by the city council and the Mayor to control such agitating may have been considered abridgment of free speech by Claire Oaks and her attorney, but to Councilman Henry Bishop it was precisely the same control the head of any business would exercise over any employee: simply telling the employee that she has the choice of not criticizing the firm in public or seeking employment elsewhere.

Eventually, Fairhope seemed filled with the acrimony of the debate. One of Miss Oaks's supporters on the library board said publicly that the librarian had been forced to endure "verbal sniping, slanderous remarks, insults, and harassment from political bodies, chauvinists, censorious popinjays, and other representatives of fanatical fringe groups." Some women in town said that the councilmen's real objection to Claire Oaks was that she was an uppity woman. Her supporters said that what really seemed to offend her detractors was her attitude and even the way she wore her hair—in a sort of Madame Butterfly bun. The Mayor said at one point that all of the trouble had been caused by Johnny-come-latelies. Some of the Johnny-come-latelies said that some of the politicians who were trying to run the library couldn't even pronounce the word "library" properly. In April, just before Claire Oaks's supporters lost their majority on the library board, they voted her a new two-year contract—an action that Henry Bishop, among others, saw as "a mockery, a contemptuous disdain of elected officials." The council responded with a sort of countercoup. In a series of votes that took everyone by surprise, the council rescinded the ordinance that had established the library board, fired the librarian, and then established a new library board. The entire exercise was completed without discussion in a matter of minutes. Around Fairhope, it is known as the Monday Night Massacre.

PEOPLE like Mayor Nix and Councilman Bishop say that the root of the controversy that led to Claire Oaks's firing was simply money. According to the Mayor, Fairhope's library is supported more generously than that of any other city in Alabama but Miss Oaks and her supporters "see no limit to the amount of money they should get, and we do." Some people in Fairhope say that the argument was actually over nothing. That is true in the sense that there were no issues left to be compromised—the books in question are in the library; a budget that amounted to a compromise was passed long ago—but the disagreement was not just about what the budget should be but about who could decide what it should be and who could decide when the decision-making process was over. "The issue is that they're politicians and I just didn't play the game," Claire Oaks said recently. "I was a threat to the power structure." The way some people in Fairhope make the same point is to say that Claire Oaks simply didn't know how to get what she wanted with a little diplomatic maneuvering and some flattery in the right places. According to William

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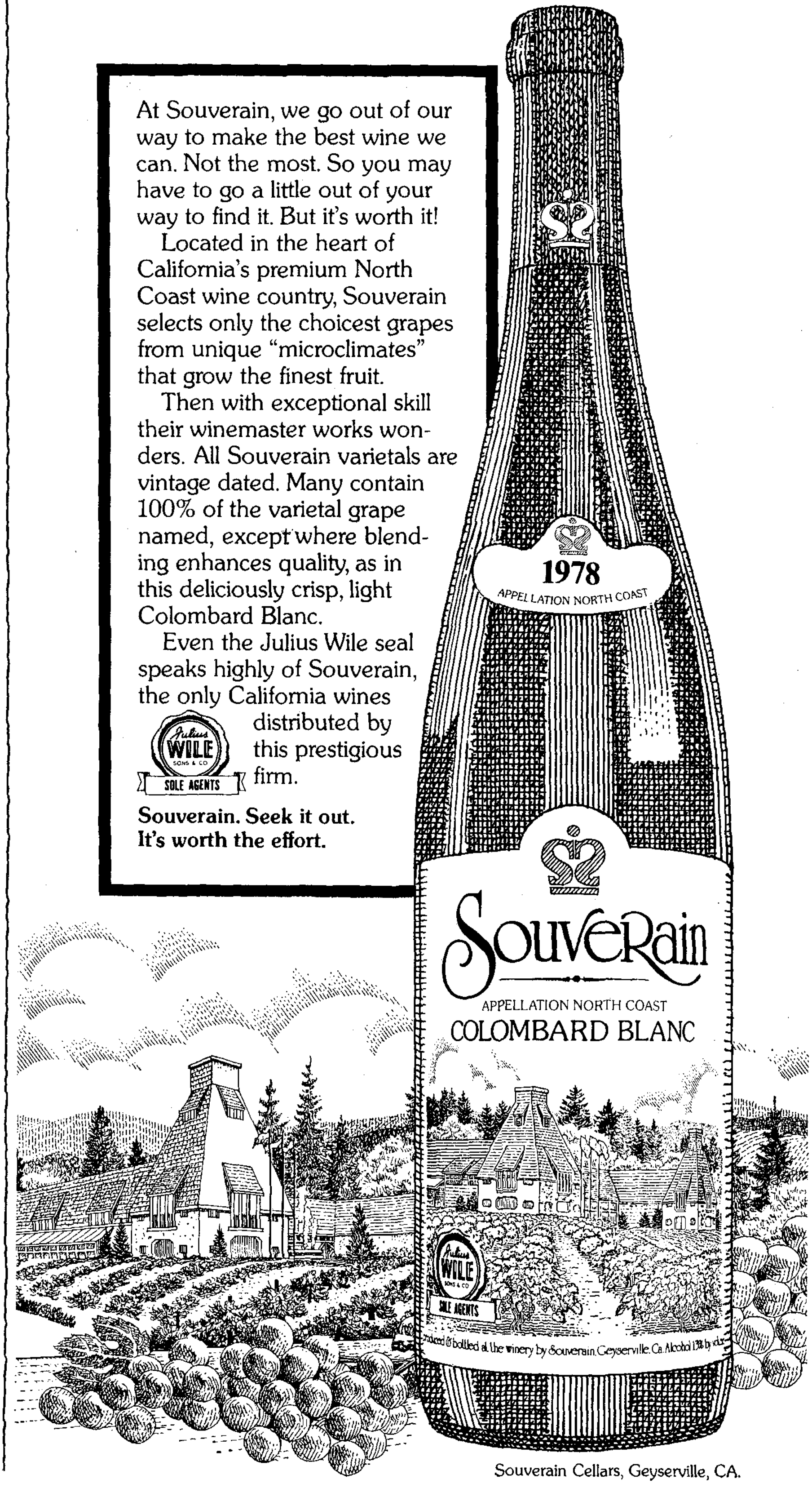

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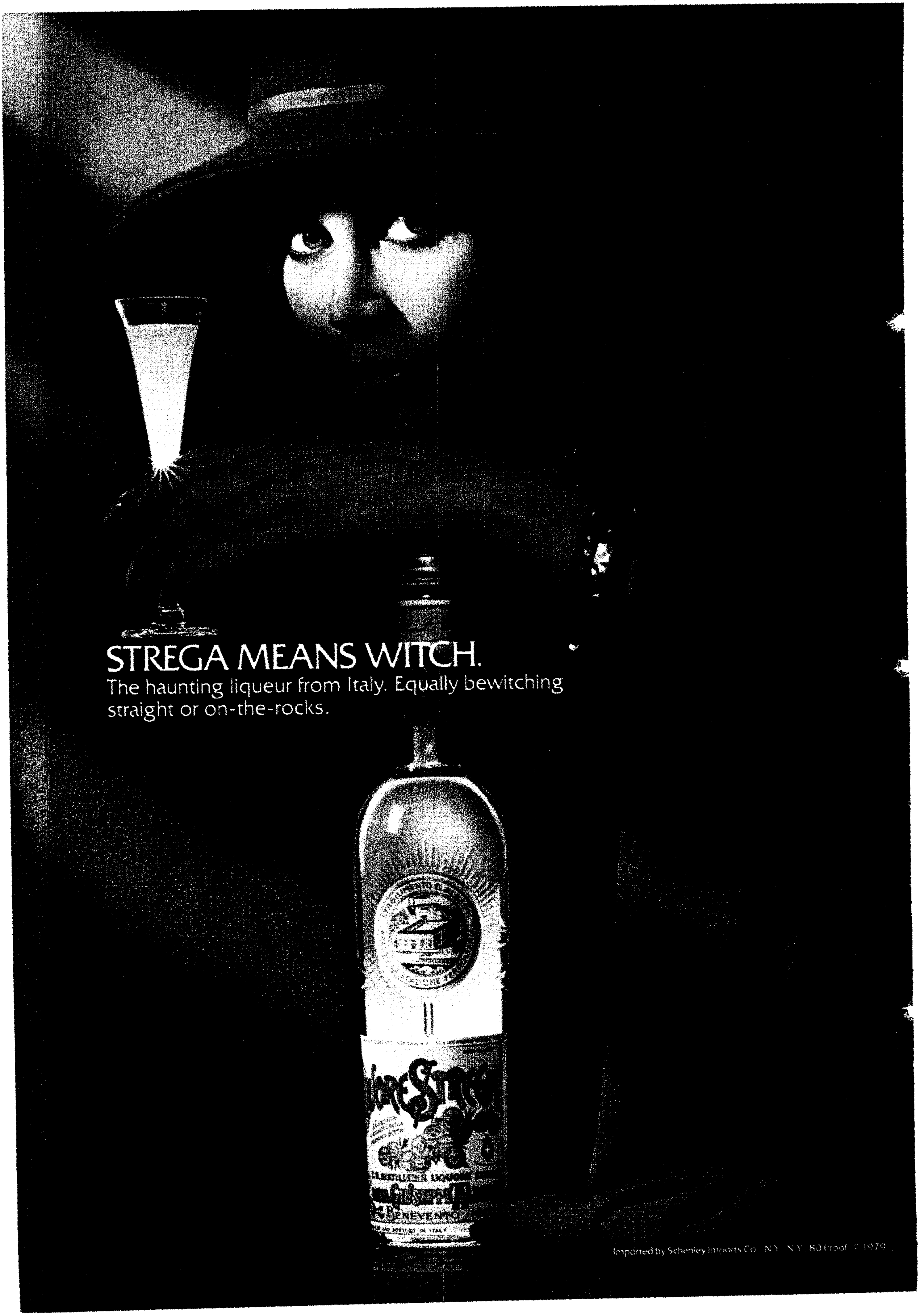
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MacGregor, an eighty-year-old retired salesman from Chicago, who served on the library board for a while, "they plotted to get rid of her because she was holding them up to ridicule." MacGregor, who takes some pride in being against the librarian and the council and just about everyone else, said not long ago, "She assumed she was smart and they were a bunch of yokels. She couldn't keep her mouth shut. But you can't be high-handed with these country people. Around here you don't protest vested authority."

Claire Oaks took her protest to the federal district court in Mobile. Under a settlement reached with the city, she was reinstated. Her supporters on the library board will be in the minority, though, and it is thought around Fairhope that once Miss Oaks has clearly established that the city council cannot control what she says, she will be moving on. "She got a little ornery, you might say," Piney Gaston said recently. "She got under the skin of the council." Mrs. Gaston, who has lived in Fairhope since she arrived from Iowa, in 1909, has seen her share of ornery women. In some periods of Fairhope history that Mrs. Gaston can remember, Claire Oaks might have thrived as an ornery woman—another independent type, to be remembered for the way she stood up to the Mayor or the way she liked to use anthropological terms to describe attempts at control or even the way she wore her hair. But those days are past in Fairhope, despite the coffee-club discussions and the streets named after single taxers. Fairhope is now a place where the Mayor can refer disparagingly to his opponents as Johnny-come-latelies, as if his town had not always been a haven for outsiders. It is a place where his opponents can talk about yokels or people who mispronounce "library" or, in Claire Oaks's term, Snopeses, as if Fairhope had not been founded by populists who despised the notion that a man's political power should be limited by the size of his vocabulary. Fairhope still has enough contentious residents to maintain a noisy controversy for six or eight months, but in most other ways it is, as the Mayor says, "like any other town."

—CALVIN TRILLIN

•

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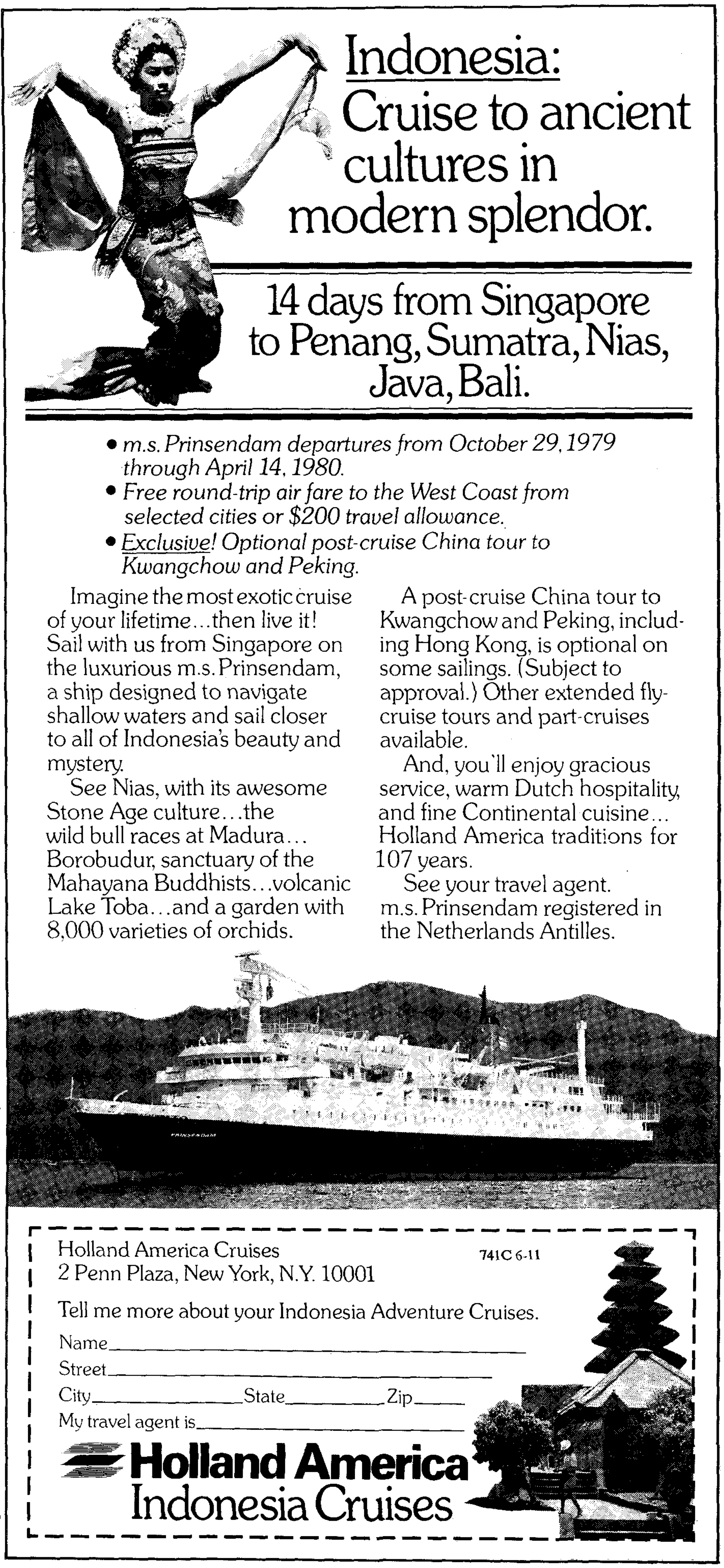

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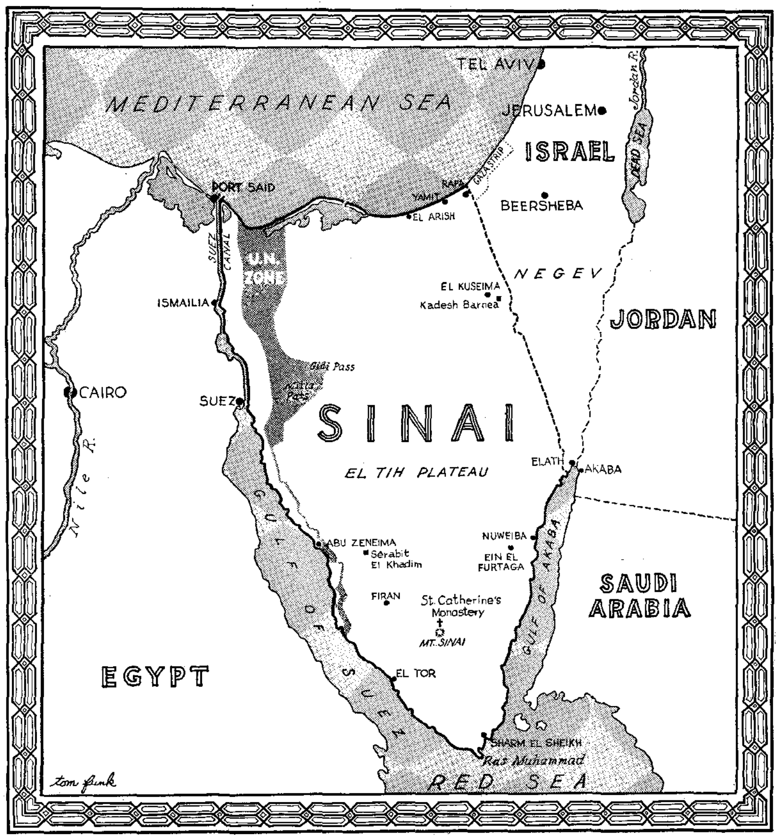
A REPORTER AT LARGE

THE GREAT AND TERRIBLE WILDERNESS—II



6 A.M. Friday, April 7, 1978. I am reliving my Jerusalem Plaza "Israeli Breakfast" ceremony of last Monday morning—stuffing myself with fish and cheese, quaffing as much fruit juice and water as I can hold, and purloining hard-boiled eggs and soft rolls for snacks along the road. The first of four journeys I plan to make into the Sinai Peninsula was completed a few days ago, with an American-born Israeli, Dr. Clinton Bailey, acting as my guide and translator. My purpose is to learn about the Sinai and its people, and Bailey, despite the debilitating aftereffects of a recent bout of hepatitis, has been an enormous help toward fulfilling that aim. His knowledge of the region and the respect he commands among, particularly, the Bedouins made the first journey—through the northeast quadrant of the peninsula—eminently successful, if exhausting. Bailey is supposed to pick me up this morning at seven. During the last two days, he has been to Tel Aviv, where he lectures in Bedouin studies at the university. He telephoned last night to say that he was still exhausted, hoarse from lecturing his students and me, and experiencing occasional twinges in his liver; however, he was prepared to go through with our longer, second trip, this one to the southern and central Sinai—at least five days in the most rugged wilderness, with small promise of comfort. I am still tired myself, having spent the last two days doing research in museums and libraries, interviewing various Sinai experts, and arranging my future trips with the Israeli, United Nations, American, Greek Orthodox, and Egyptian bureaucracies.

AT exactly seven o'clock, there was Bailey and his chock-full Land-Rover, incongruously pulling up at the Plaza's garish main entrance. He was cheerier than I had expected him to be. The doorman, shaking his head with Talmudic foreboding, helped me put my gear in the Land-Rover, and we drove off into the hazy orange sun through East Jerusalem and the suburb of Silwan, on the road to Jericho. We were waved through a few Israel Defense Forces checkpoints and roadblocks—this, after all, was a route of Arabs travelling between Israel and Jordan, as part of the "Open Bridges" policy—and the I.D.F. was nothing if not security-obsessed. Just about the time we were returning to Jerusalem from the northeastern Sinai, on Tuesday night, a reserve soldier, hitchhiking back to his Army camp in the West Bank, was shot in the head right in front of the Rockefeller Museum, in East Jerusalem, by three terrorists, who then fled to the warrens of Silwan. (A few hours after that incident, a man from Haga, a civil-defense patrol unit made up of older Israelis, went berserk and fatally shot an Arab youth at the same spot. He was taken into custody, and the youth was buried at an angry funeral on Wednesday afternoon.) So there was tension as usual in the West Bank, but I was relaxed as we plunged down the steep road to the Dead Sea Valley, recalling familiar landmarks from a trip I had made here in 1969, when I covered the War of Attrition for this magazine. Only one unfamiliar sore thumb stood out—a new settlement of the Gush Emunim, an ultranationalistic Orthodox sect that is dedicated to establishing Jewish encampments in the Biblical lands of Judea and Samaria, the Israeli terms for the West Bank.

At the leaden, discouraging Dead Sea, we turned south, away from Jericho, down the good, paved road toward the Arava, the hottest, driest segment of the Great Rift Valley, a series of geological faults that run from the source of the Jordan River some four thousand miles to Mozambique. With the Dead Sea and Jordan's red granite mountains of Moab and Edom on our left and the pocked escarpments of the Judean desert on our right, we sped past King Hussein's luckless luxury hotel at the head of the Dead Sea, the ruins of Qumran (where the Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered), Ein Gedi (a thriving town and resort), Masada (the site of the celebrated hilltop fortress where Jewish zealots held out for three years against the Romans, then committed mass suicide), and, at last, Sodom (equally celebrated Biblically and etymologically). From the inactive fleshpots and the active potash works of Sodom, at the southern tip of the Dead Sea—the nadir of the world, thirteen hundred feet below sea level—we broke onto the new road through the Arava. It was miserably desolate and oppressive, with little to relieve the scrubby monotony. For what amounted to a border road between two nations technically at war, there was hardly any military presence—only hitchhiking Israeli soldiers toting their ever-present weapons.

Farther on, near the site of King Solomon's copper mines, now called the Timna mines, we sensed something approaching a sea breeze from the direction of Elath, at the apex of the Gulf of Akaba. Since the copper mines had shut down, the major industry in Elath was fast becoming tourism. It was no longer just a frontier town and port but more a busy seaside resort, with boulevards, cabañas, supermarkets, restaurants, hotels, souvenir booths, tennis courts, condominiums, fast-food stands (felafel, as well as hot dogs), excursion boats, backpackers, bikini-clad women, topless men, and Bedouin workers. Elath is an example of how Israelis manage to pluck prosperity from the flames of adversity. Even the roadside Bedouins, peddling camel rides, *kaffiyehs*, *galabiyas*, and photograph poses to the tourists, were doing business the envy of any Disneyland higgler. Several of them took time out from their hawking to wish "Doctor*r* Bayl*ee*" Godspeed in the Sinai. A friend of one of the peddlers, a member of the Tarabin tribe named Suleiman, was going to Nuweiba, a third of the way down the peninsula, along the Gulf of Akaba, and we offered him a lift.

The conventional guidebook description of the Gulf of Akaba is "a ribbon of cobalt blue" rimmed by mountains "of stark, sweeping majesty." The imagery is, at least, accurate. The Sinai, which begins just south of Elath, makes itself felt immediately as a very special part of the world. Even guidebook clichés seem timid. It is, quite simply, breathtaking. But before we plunged into the wilderness Bailey suggested that we stop at something called Raphy Nelson's Saloon and Beach Club, at Wadi Taba, a few kilometres beyond the frontier. It was a wild and woozy scene, a haphazard resort in the Polynesian manner, thronged with hard-drinking, sybaritic Israelis—not a common sight in that country. Well-endowed women cavorted about under the thatched roof of an open-air bar while two young beach bums amused themselves by painting buxom nudes on an old piano. Sunbathers, looking like Pop Art sculptures, were here and there along the sandy, trashy beach. When our Tarabin hitchhiker took a look at the scene, he fled back to the discreet safety of the Land-Rover; however, I saw some Bedouins working within the beach club.

Raphy Nelson, a bearded, bare-chested man who, I suspected, had designed himself to resemble Ernest Hemingway, came over and welcomed us. He said, between hugs and kisses with arriving customers (all of whom seemed to know him intimately), that he had come to this "end of the world" at Wadi Taba seven years ago, started his saloon with next to nothing, and has been enjoying its success ever since. Today, he told us, was more frenetic than usual because—"Can you believe it?"—Frank Sinatra, Gregory Peck, and Mrs. Johnny Carson were going to pay a call any minute now, in person! I recalled having read in the Jerusalem *Post* that Frank Sinatra and a jet plane full of his friends had arrived in Israel to dedicate a Sinatra-sponsored building at the Hebrew University. The last mirage I had expected, or wanted, to see in the Sinai was Frank Sinatra and his friends at play, so Bailey and I beat a quick retreat from the compulsive hilarity of Raphy Nelson's, with one very relieved Bedouin hitchhiker. (As it turned out, Sinatra and company never showed; they had apparently been driving their government hosts crazy with last-minute changes of schedule.)

As soon as we started south again on the coast road, the graceful multiple trunks and branches of doum palm trees, the spiny caper bushes, the eroded granite walls on our right, and the deep-blue gulf on our left erased the Raphy Nelson chaos from our minds. A few kilometres farther on, we came opposite Gezirat Fara'un, a tiny, irregular offshore-island fortress originally named for a pharaoh, although no pharaoh was ever known to have set foot on it. Some Biblical authorities say that the Israelites set foot on it, after having departed from Kadesh Barnea. It may have been the site of Etzion Geber, at which the wanderers turned north toward the Promised Land. The island's history during the Crusades is on much firmer ground. From the early Crusades on, the Gulf of Akaba was of extreme importance to both the Muslims and the Christians as a strategic point of control over trade and pilgrimage. Renaud de Châtillon, a Christian commander, captured Gezirat Fara'un and built a sturdy European-style castle on it, which he called Graye. Stealing a page from King Solomon, he brought two ships in pieces from Jaffa down through the Sinai and assembled them at Graye, with the intention of sweeping the Red Sea of Arab vessels and taking Mecca. One of the ships foundered, however, and the other was captured by Saladin, who, stealing his own historical page, carried sections of more ships across the Sinai on camels, also assembled them near Graye, and seized the entire region from the sea. It was said that Louis IX (St. Louis), King of France and a committed Crusader, was held prisoner at Graye by the Muslims until his ransom was delivered.

A few kilometres south of the island is a compact, deep-water bay enclosed by granite cliffs, known locally as the Fjord, and indeed looking like a tropical version of Scandinavia. It is a lovely, lonely spot for sunbathing and skin-diving among the coral reefs, when the excursion boats from Elath and the

J. B. BACKMAN
—
HOLDER
OF TWO
HONORABLE
MENTIONS
H. Martin

private yachts aren't anchored there. The underwater reefs seemed to be slabs of jade in the bright sunlight, and this coloring against the umber of the mountains, the gold-yellow of the sand, the mauve coastline of Saudi Arabia across the gulf, and the unrelenting azure of the sky was exhilarating. The spectacle moved Suleiman to recite a poem for Bailey, not specifically about nature but about a Tarabin coward called the Remainer. During the mobilization of the Tarabin tribe for war against the Tiyaha, several generations ago, everyone took up arms except for one man, the Remainer, who insisted on staying behind because he had no stomach for fighting. When the Tiyaha found him alone, the Remainer swore by the sea and all the mountains of Sinai that he would never fight them and he pleaded for their protection. The Tiyaha, impressed, let him go unharmed, and the Tarabin, also impressed, but for different reasons, wrote him into their tribal lore. It was a rare case of Bedouin conscientious objection.

Farther along the coast road, I noticed a cluster of fishermen's huts and tents along the shore, and I asked Bailey if the Bedouins made a decent living by fishing the gulf. He said they do well enough, but the Tarabin and the Muzeina Bedouins, who populate the gulf coast right down to its southernmost point, at Sharm El Sheikh, were mainly herdsmen and menial laborers for the Israelis these days, in spite of their proximity to the sea. Suleiman, for instance, told Bailey that he works for the Elath Department of Health. When he feels the call of the wilderness, he hitchhikes to Nuweiba and takes his camel up into the mountains to forage until his money runs out and he must return to Elath. He makes do in this fashion and maintains his ties to traditional Bedouin culture. Bailey asked him about smuggling, which had once brought prosperity to the Tarabin and the Muzeina. "Ah," Suleiman said, his eyes lighting up, "if there was good smuggling still, there would be money to sell. Now, without so much smuggling, we have not great money, but enough. After eight hours of work, you rest. In good smuggling times, under the Egyptians, there was more money but no rest. We were tired from little sleep and trouble from the police. The Egyptians were always accusing you of something and throwing you in jail. I do not miss smuggling, although I cannot afford to buy fodder for my camel. And with this drought my camel has only broom plants to eat, and young camels must eat many different plants in different seasons or they will not eat at all. It can be hard, but I do not miss smuggling."

The fine highway we were barreling along would be the pride and joy of any American county. This permanent connection between Elath and Sharm El Sheikh was completed in 1971, its broad, paved surface following the track that the Israeli Army's 9th Brigade, under the command of Colonel Abraham Yoffe, raced down to capture Sharm El Sheikh from the Egyptians in 1956. In honor of that event, it is named the 9th Brigade Road. As the highway winds around steep mountainsides and crosses wadi deltas and dunes spilling into the gulf, it presents a new vista at every turn. If your attention is elsewhere for as little as thirty seconds, you miss an extraordinary sight. "My God, look how beautiful it is!" Bailey suddenly shouted. "How can Israel give this back? We need it more than the Egyptians do. The Mediterranean is nothing compared to this. Begin says he'll return the Sinai to the Egyptians over three years. I think he should propose to rent it from them for at least fifty years, see how things go, and then maybe give it back." But is all this beauty and space worth the threat of war, I asked. "Who knows?" Bailey said. "For me, it's irreplaceable."

Nuweiba (which means "bubbling springs") marked the tribal boundary between the Tarabin and the Muzeina. It is actually three distinct places: Nuweiba Tarabin, in the north, consisting of a thick grove of palms, a shallow bay, some driftwood fishermen's shacks, and the ruins of a fort; Neviot, a moshav established in 1971, thriving on agriculture and tourism; and, just to the south, Nuweiba Muzeina, a somnolent, sparsely inhabited oasis, which comes to life in the late summer when Muzeina flock to the palm groves to pick dates. Suleiman, being a Tarabin, wanted to be dropped off at Nuweiba Tarabin, so we turned onto a sandy track and stopped in front of an *arisha*, an arbor booth, with a sign reading "COFFEE." Suleiman insisted on buying us some refreshment, and we were invited to sit on a carpet under the booth, amid a dozen or so Bedouins, El Arish merchants, and salukis (a scrawny, piebald version of that elegant breed, used by Bedouins for guarding sheep and hunting), all of them sleeping away the midday heat in the shade. One fat

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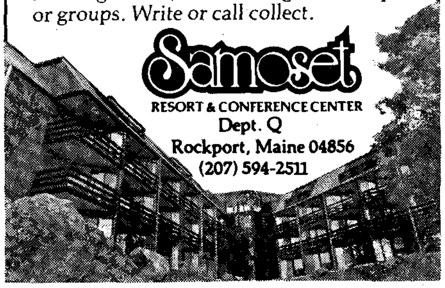

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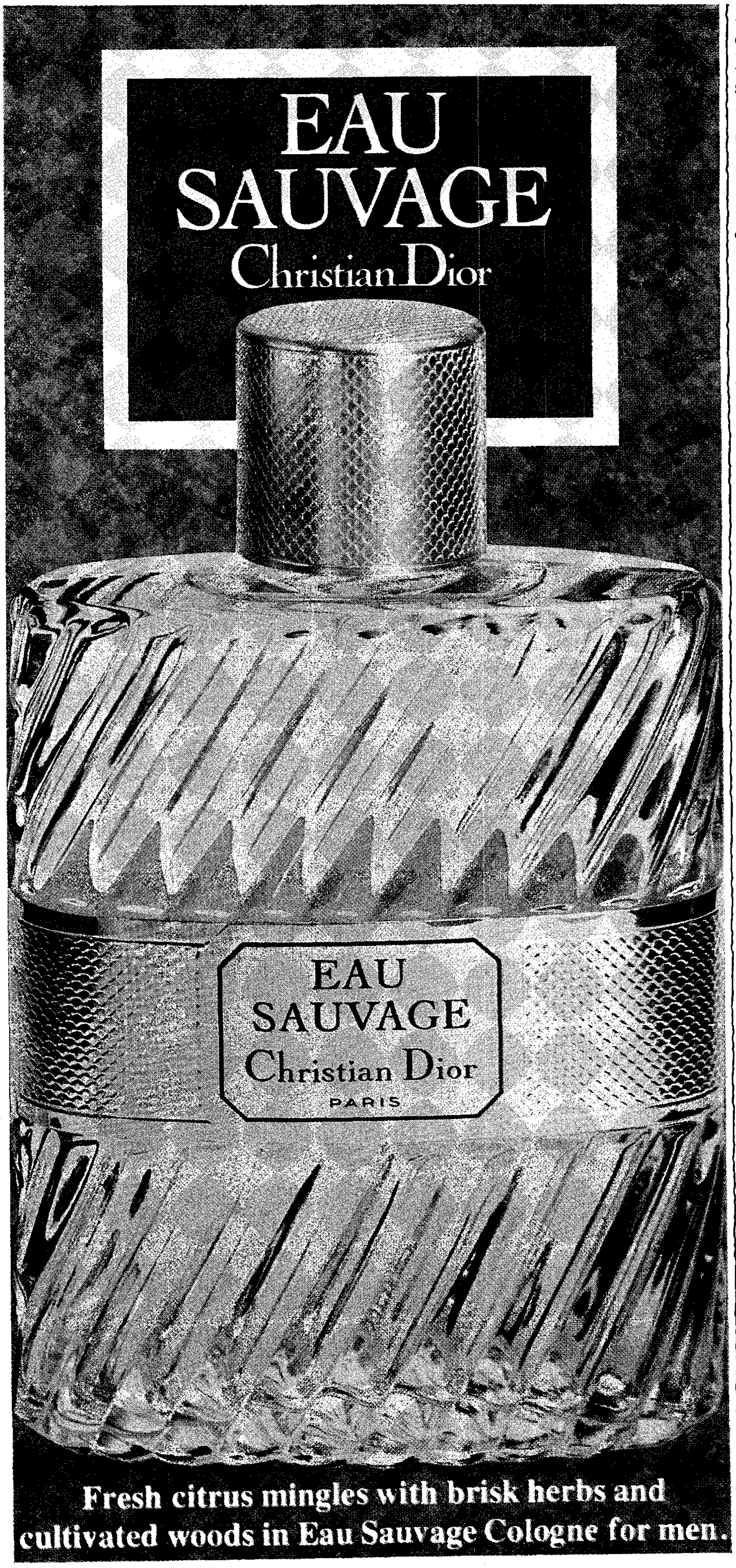
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SAK'S FIFTH AVENUE

Bedouin seemed quite dead, his *kaffiyeh* covering his face like a shroud and his hands folded on his chest; finally, he stirred to disperse a cloud of black flies from his body. (Sinai flies are really no different in appearance from other flies, but, being desert dwellers, they tend to be more hungry, all the time.) In a room off the *arisha*, a transistor radio crackled with Arab music, and a man cooked a sour-smelling stew for lunch. A few of the Bedouins awoke as we sat down, shoeless, on the carpet; they all seemed to know Bailey, who talked quietly with them. Suleiman bought us orange sodas—surprisingly cold, thanks to a Styrofoam ice chest. After downing my soda in two gulps, I went off to explore the nearby fort ruins.

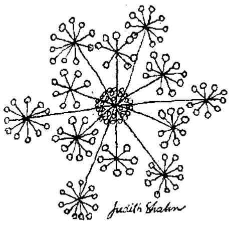
I THOUGHT I had witnessed the last culture shock in the Sinai at Raphy Nelson's boisterous beach club, but I was wrong. Neviot, the Israeli moshav coöperative between the two Nuweibas, prospering from flowers and vegetables grown under silvery plastic strips that hold the moisture, seemed a conventional settlement at first. But witnessing the scene at the Neviot cafeteria on the beach, I was transported back to, say, Provincetown in the mid-nineteen-sixties. At the cafeteria, legions of hippies, in various modes of dress and undress, were munching listlessly on gray hamburgers or, more often, just staring straight ahead at nothing in particular. There was a definite Northern European look to them; Neviot had been discovered by rootless youths from Sweden, Denmark, and Germany, as well as from Canada and America, several years before. The atmosphere was sullen and anachronistic. A German counterman sang early Beatles songs as he served up hamburgers and French fries; a few Bedouins, not at all upset at the near-nudity, walked among the loungers selling trinkets; an emaciated blond girl sketched a beach scene while a male counterpart played backgammon by himself.

Bailey and I ordered some lunch and carried our trays to a table occupied by a tanned young man in a bathing suit. He was from Toronto, he told us, and had gravitated to Neviot after a working stay at a kibbutz in the Galilee. I asked him how he spent his days at Neviot. "Well, just mostly hanging around," he said. "That's what all of us do—just hang around. I like it. It beats working. Nobody really talks. We just get stoned and look at each other. We crash on the beach back there, and a lot of us go to

Elath once a week for cheap food, so we can live on about a dollar a day. The guys who are better off buy food here at the cafeteria or from the Bedouins. Some of those Bedouins are making a small fortune off us. They come down the beach on their camels every morning, waking us up and selling dope, food, and all kinds of junk. They even offer to take us on camel rides into the mountains. The regular Bedouins hate those guys. The moshav is happy, though. They make good money from this place, and they don't mind us camping out around here, just so long as we stay clear of them. But it's all going to end for me soon, I guess. My folks are coming over here to bring me back to Toronto. It was nice while it lasted."

Our schedule for the rest of this long first day in the southern Sinai called for us to turn inland up Wadi Watir, one of the peninsula's widest and grandest dry riverbeds, and arrive by nightfall at Ein El Furtaga, a verdant oasis, where the Tarabin have their tribal seat. Before leaving the 9th Brigade Road and heading into rough country, we decided to stop at the Yair Crossroads gas station and rest area, just outside Neviot, to fill up with fuel and water.

On the way to the gas station, while I tried to shake off the depression from our visit to Neviot, Bailey said, "Are you ready for another culture shock? Well, whether you are or not, you're going to meet Zvi Swet." Zvi Swet, Bailey explained, was a "fighting Jew," a British commando during the Second World War who had fought in just about every daring raid the Allies could dream up. Two weeks before the end of the war, he stepped on a land mine and lost both legs. He survived and went to Palestine, where he married a Vienna-born woman named Ruth, and raised a family. He turned against his former comrades-in-arms with a vengeance. Confined to a wheelchair, he became a chief of operations of the Stern Gang, an uncompromising underground terrorist unit that wreaked havoc on the British troops in Palestine and, occasionally, on the Haganah, the Jewish defense militia. Even after Israel won its independence, Swet refused to temper his nationalistic fury, and bad luck continued to dog him. His sons were either killed or badly wounded in later wars with the Arabs, and his daughter, a medical-corps officer, contracted and barely survived a rare disease. During the sunburst of optimism after the 1967 war, Swet came to the Sinai and opened a gas station at Nuweiba, before there was a Neviot. He and what remained of his family had built it all by themselves ("He can do more work from his wheelchair than ten men with good legs," Bailey said), and they were still adding on boutiques, snack bars, and living quarters. They started a new life in the Sinai because Swet was tired of his Tel Aviv neighbors' pitying him. He wanted independence. When Begin offered to return the Sinai to Sadat, Swet drove to Jerusalem to see the Prime Minister personally and gave him hell, as one old terrorist to another. He told Begin that what was fought for must be kept.


Judith Shahn

At the Yair Crossroads—churning with automotive activity, Bedouin encampments beside the gas pumps, and new construction—Bailey introduced me to Swet and his wife while the Land-Rover was seen to. From the description, I had expected to meet an unreconstructed firebrand. Instead, Swet was a bald, soft-spoken, gray-bearded bear of a man with the most gentle eyes I had ever seen, his massive torso ridiculously imprisoned in a metal wheelchair. Over coffee and thin Israeli yogurts, we talked about his life in Nuweiba. "I rent this land from the government," Swet said. "Now it appears I won't have more than a three-year lease from Begin. In Neviot, my competition across the way, they get government concessions—and hippies and drugs and whatever. This place I have built from nothing, with almost no concessions. I have mostly Bedouins working for me. I think I get along better with them than anyone else does. I understand them and they understand me. They say to me that we Jews were here in the Sinai first, so it's all right for us to be here now. They are wise. And they are changing, too, but slowly. Listen, I will tell you an anecdote. For years, the Bedouins working here at my gas station have always looked at a broken car or truck and said the problem was due to Allah. '*Inshallah*,' you know? Like saying 'What can you do?' and throwing up your hands. But just recently a Bedouin said to me that a flat tire was flat because it needed air. It was the first time he didn't say 'Allah did it.' And they are good mechanics, proud of their work. They have time on their side, too. When, for instance, a carburetor is broken, they form a committee and

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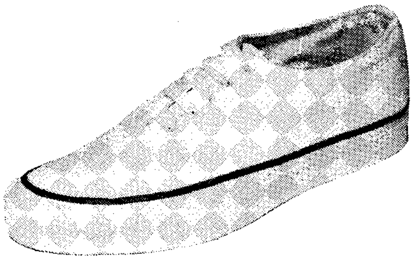

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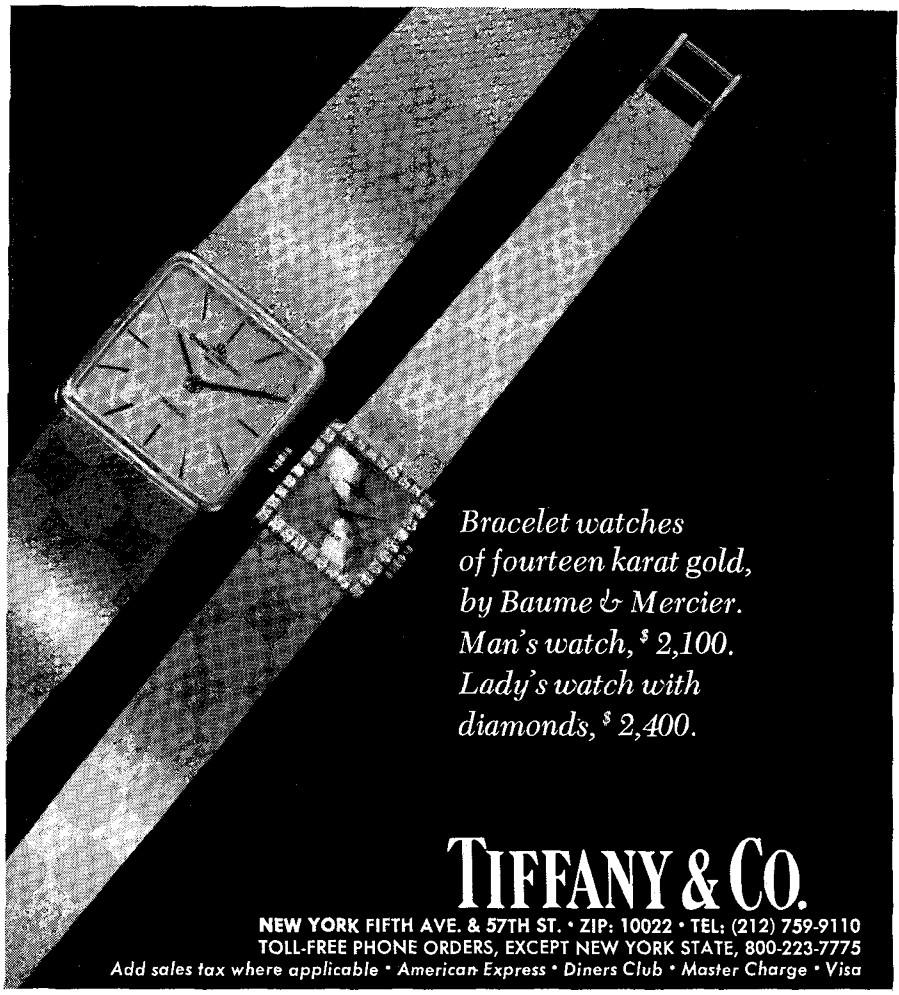

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take it apart and let everybody offer suggestions on fixing it. And they fix it! Amazing."

A small argument was developing nearby between an Israeli tourist and a Bedouin on a camel, over a photograph taken by the former of the latter without proper payment. Swet wheeled himself into the fray and settled the matter, in a mixture of Hebrew and Arabic, within thirty seconds. It was an inspiring performance, and we all applauded him when he returned. He smiled shyly, and said, "I have learned to be a peacemaker here. Living on the border between the Tarabin and the Muzeina, I have to be sometimes the umpire. The gas station is the nerve center of the two tribes. Not long ago, a Tarabin approached a Muzeina woman not nicely. Soon both tribes were lined up facing each other near here. All Sinai knew immediately about the insult through a kind of bush telegraph—the taxis and the El Arish merchants in their trucks. On both sides, their faces turned green and blue with anger. Stones began to fly, and one Bedouin pulled his *shíbriya* knife from its sheath. That's when I wheeled between them and broke it up. Then I built a booth for both tribes and we had an *atwa*.* They are still in the *atwa* negotiating stage. But if you get a stone on your head you don't forget about it so easily. Some trouble might break out again and I will have to be the umpire."

I asked Swet what I knew was a painful question: What will he do if the Egyptians are given back the Sinai?

He swallowed hard, and said, "I knew many Egyptians when I was in the British Army. In the nineteen-forties, they rarely went past Kantara on the canal; they felt nothing for this place. Now, suddenly, all the Sinai is holy soil to them. When the time comes to give the Sinai back, I will decide. I have already been offered a lot of money by a Swedish company for this gas station, but I turned it down." He paused for a moment. "If the Egyptians would want me to stay, maybe I would stay."

I told him that I planned to be in Egypt soon.

"If you see Sadat," he said, "tell him I want to speak with him, to explain to him how it really is here. We will sit down and talk like *mensch*, and we

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*An *atwa* is a truce conclave between Bedouin combatants, in which possibilities for peace are explored. Later, some compensation from one side to the other—maybe through *diya*, or "blood money"—furthers the process. More ritual negotiations take place until peace—a *sulha*—is perhaps achieved. It has been said that Sadat made both an *atwa* and a *sulha* in his 1977 peace initiative and visit to Jerusalem.

will see who is right. That is how I talk in Jerusalem with my own government."

Ruth Swet, a large, earth-mother sort of woman, noticed the arrival of a truckload of the ubiquitous Arishiya merchants. "Here come the swindlers to cheat my Bedouins," she said. "I'll have to deal with them before they bargain the clothes off our backs. When they swindle, they are sometimes afraid to sleep near the Bedouins, and they ask if they can sleep outside near us." She hurried off to greet the merchants.

Swet watched her go, and said, "You know, we sleep outside almost every night, under the stars, like the Bedouins. There is no danger, no trouble in all the years I've been here. When you sleep in a house, your thoughts are only as high as the ceiling, but outside they are as high as the stars. That is what I love about the Sinai—the space, the freedom, the stars. Bailey, when you're in the hills please try to make a tape recording for me of that Bedouin wedding song I like so much—the beautiful, sad one. I can't hear it enough." Bailey said he would try.

We shook hands with Swet, wished each other well, and drove off down the coast road to Wadi Watir.

THE distance from the junction of the coast road and Wadi Watir to Ein El Furtaga was just eighteen kilometres, but it was eighteen kilometres into the hard, isolated, mysterious world of the Bedouin loose in nature. A sign in Hebrew, Arabic, and English at the mouth of the wadi warned "FOUR-WHEEL-DRIVE VEHICLES ONLY." The advice was well given. Wadi Watir is a meandering, erosion-chiselled notch running from the inland mountains to the gulf, a strapping stepchild of the Grand Canyon, with granite walls rising almost vertically from a boulder-strewn floor, sometimes as wide as two hundred yards, sometimes as narrow as fifteen. Once we were inside the notch, the afternoon sun was blocked by the sheer walls, and as Bailey struggled to avoid the boulders and soft sand it grew chilly enough so that we needed our jackets. No sign of animate life was to be seen—just neatly cut, intersecting branch wadis, spiny caper bushes, and the rubble of ageless avalanches. The only man-made objects were occasional piles of stones, marking tribal borders (if the stones are black, they have the added significance of a black curse on any enemy), and flood gauges attached to the wadi walls.

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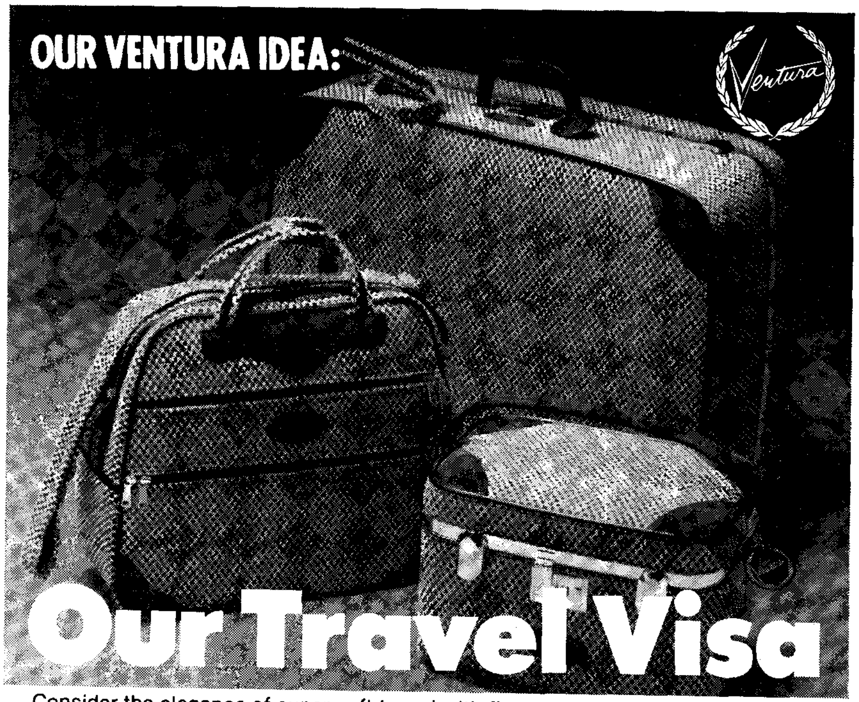

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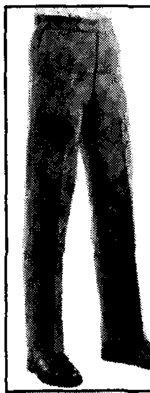

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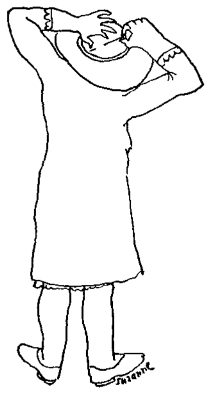
flood—the at once dreaded and life-giving *sayl*—is especially dangerous in the longer, deeper wadis. Because there is so little vegetation to absorb the mountain rains, a roaring, ruinous torrent can career through a previously bone-dry river valley just a few hours after a rainstorm twenty miles away. One famous Sinai *sayl*, in 1867, washed out an entire Bedouin camp, leaving forty persons dead. There is an added hazard since the Arab-Israeli wars: land mines and unexploded artillery shells are often unearthed and carried downstream in the torrent, like live unguided missiles. No sane Bedouin camps near a wadi during the rainy season. Bailey, in his investigations of star lore as the governing factor in Bedouin encounters with nature, was told this bit of ancient verse by a Muzeina: "*In tila Suhayl/ La tamin is sayl/ Law kan agab il layl*" ("If Canopus rises, don't trust the flood, even if it be the end of the night"). "Don't trust the flood" is drummed into every Bedouin child's head.

In early April, the flash-flood danger is nonexistent, but in riverbeds like Wadi Watir there are still watermarks ten feet high on the walls and brimming rock pools that have trapped the runoff water. The pools are introduced by, at first, a damp spot on the wadi floor, then a mud puddle, then a tiny rivulet boasting some grass. One cool, shaded pool we passed, looking like a bottomless Scottish tarn, was perfect for a dip, in spite of the chill in the air. We stopped and approached the rim of the pool, only to discover a solitary man in a bathing suit reading a book on an opposite ledge. He was an Israeli, who must have hiked in to this idyllic spot, wanting to be left alone. It seemed best to leave him in his splendid isolation, and we drove on.



I could tell by a widening rivulet, disappearing underground and suddenly reappearing before us, that Furtaga was not far off. After another kilometre or two, there it was, around a bend—a large oasis in a broad plain, studded with clumps of palms, small *bustans* (gardens) fed by diverted water channels from the main stream, scattered booths and tents, and prowling camels and salukis. We circled the plain, Bailey pointing out one of the Tarabin Sheikh Suleiman Ibn Jazi's goat-hair tents ("Even though I have some money, I can make any place my home," Jazi once told Bailey), and then we parked the Land-Rover before a small rise, upon which were the booth and tent of the Sheikh's brother Salim Ibn Jazi. "Docto*rr* Bayl*ee*" was welcomed with the usual warm *salamats* and handshakes, and, of course, we were invited to have dinner and spend the night with Salim. A campfire of acacia sticks had already been started, and tea was brewing in a blackened brass pot in the middle of the fire (a Bedouin adage holds that a good man has a charred teapot, because it shows that he is hospitable). Some neighbors and Salim's sons came forward to greet us, as well as some more of the omnipresent El Arish merchants, their red truck parked behind the booth. The Arishiya, too, were invited to be Salim's guests for the night; he obviously trusted them more than most Bedouins did, or perhaps he owed them more money.

We sat, with our shoes off, on a rug in front of the booth, sipping tea in clear glasses and exchanging interminable *salamats*. The men chain-smoked the Time cigarettes and the younger boys chewed with delight on the candy that we had bought for them at a supermarket in Elath, along with more substantial provisions. One of the boys, a frail lad with a runny nose, a nasty cough, and a feverish glaze to his eyes, sat next to me and stared at my tape recorder. I let him examine it closely while Bailey translated, in muted asides, the talk around the fire. All the women and girls of Furtaga were far up Wadi Watir with their flocks, looking for pasture. The men were making do without them, cooking, eating, trading, smoking, and minding the houses and camels ("Camels are man's work, too strong for a woman," Salim said). Since Salim was an employee of the Nature Reserves Authority—the warden of the Wadi Watir area—he had better reason than the others for remaining behind.

As the tea flowed and the dusk settled, the conversation took new turns. Salim complained that some Tarabin young men did not want to tend their camels and live the traditional Bedouin life but preferred to work in Elath until they earned enough money to buy pickup trucks. In some families, only one son stayed around long enough to be trained in the old ways. His complaint had a universal ring to it. When Bailey told him that he could no longer drink liquor, because of his hepatitis, Salim laughed and said that was good news, since alcohol is forbidden by the

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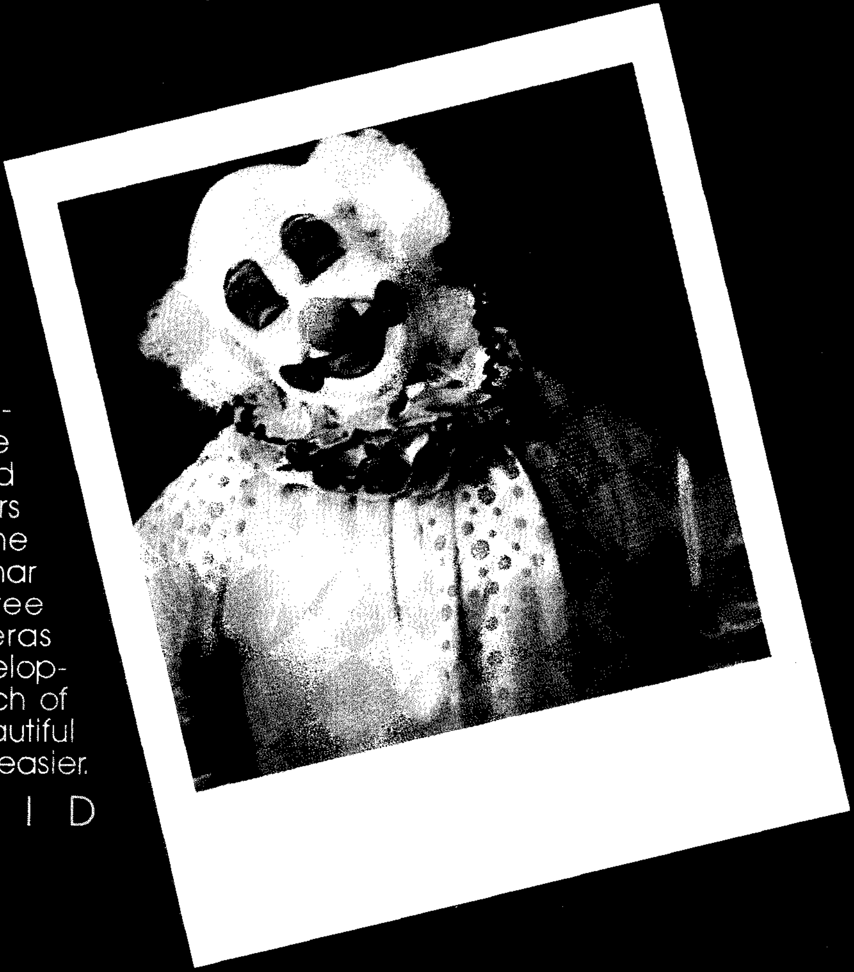
SX-70
YELLOW



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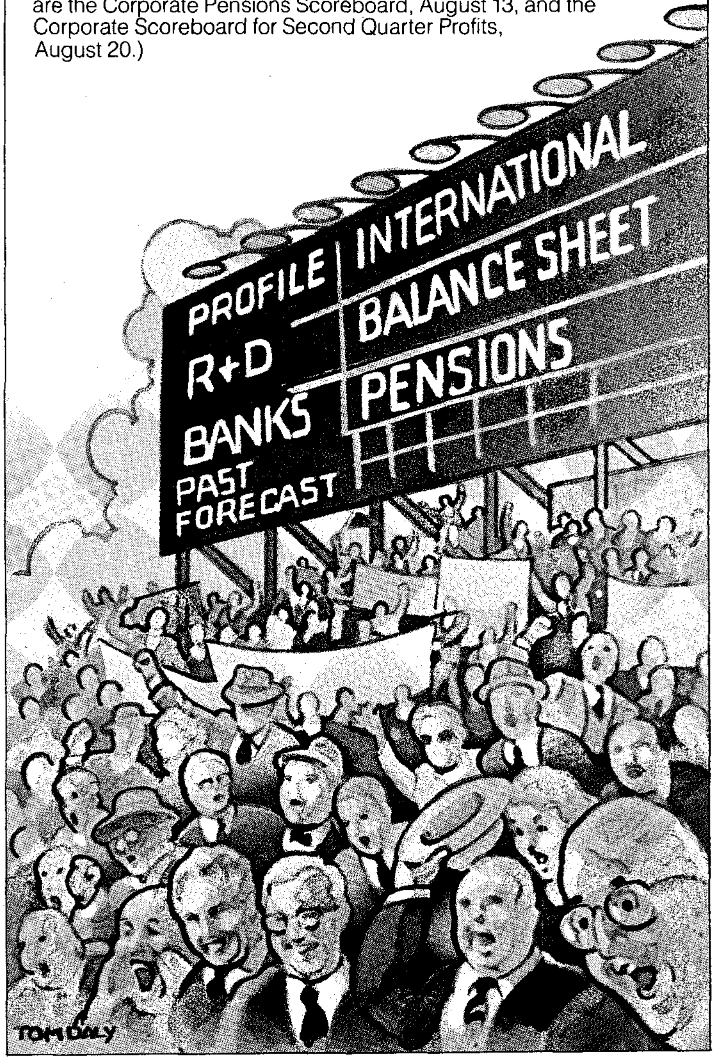
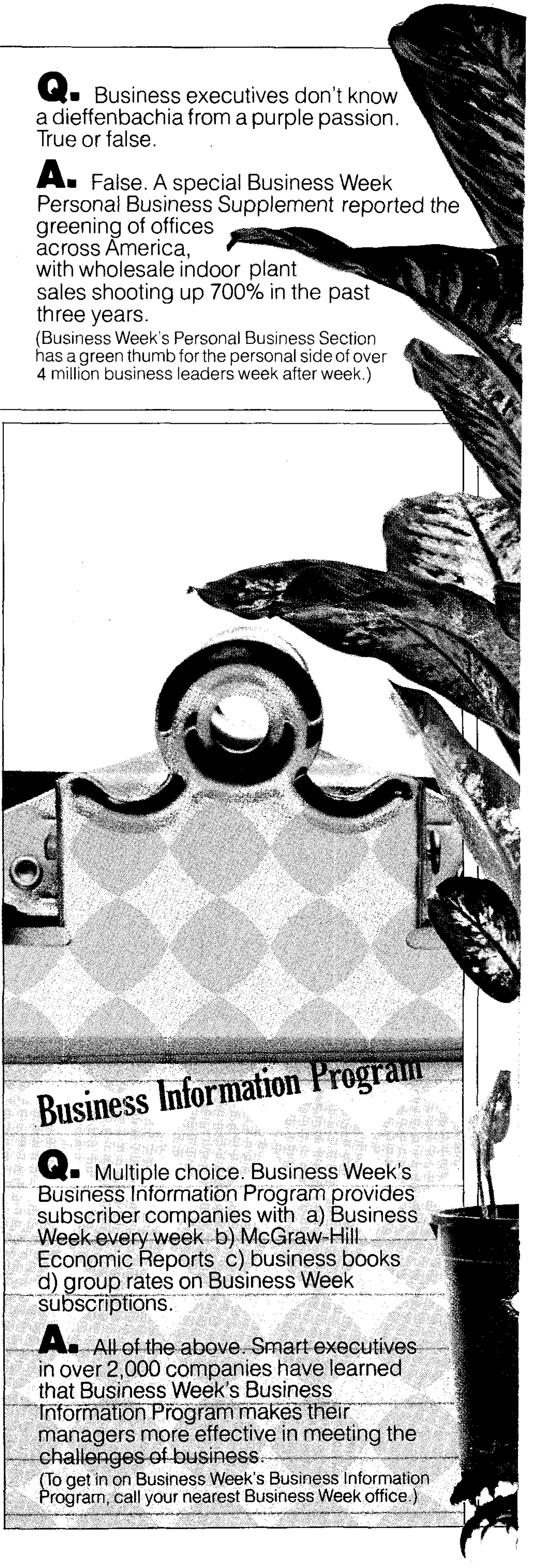
A. Yes, indeed. Compiled ten times a year for Business Week by Standard and Poor's Compustat Services, Inc., Corporate Scoreboards survey the economic performance ranging from corporate profits to banks and R&D spending.

(The next big Corporate Scoreboard editorial issues coming up are the Corporate Pensions Scoreboard, August 13, and the Corporate Scoreboard for Second Quarter Profits, August 20.)





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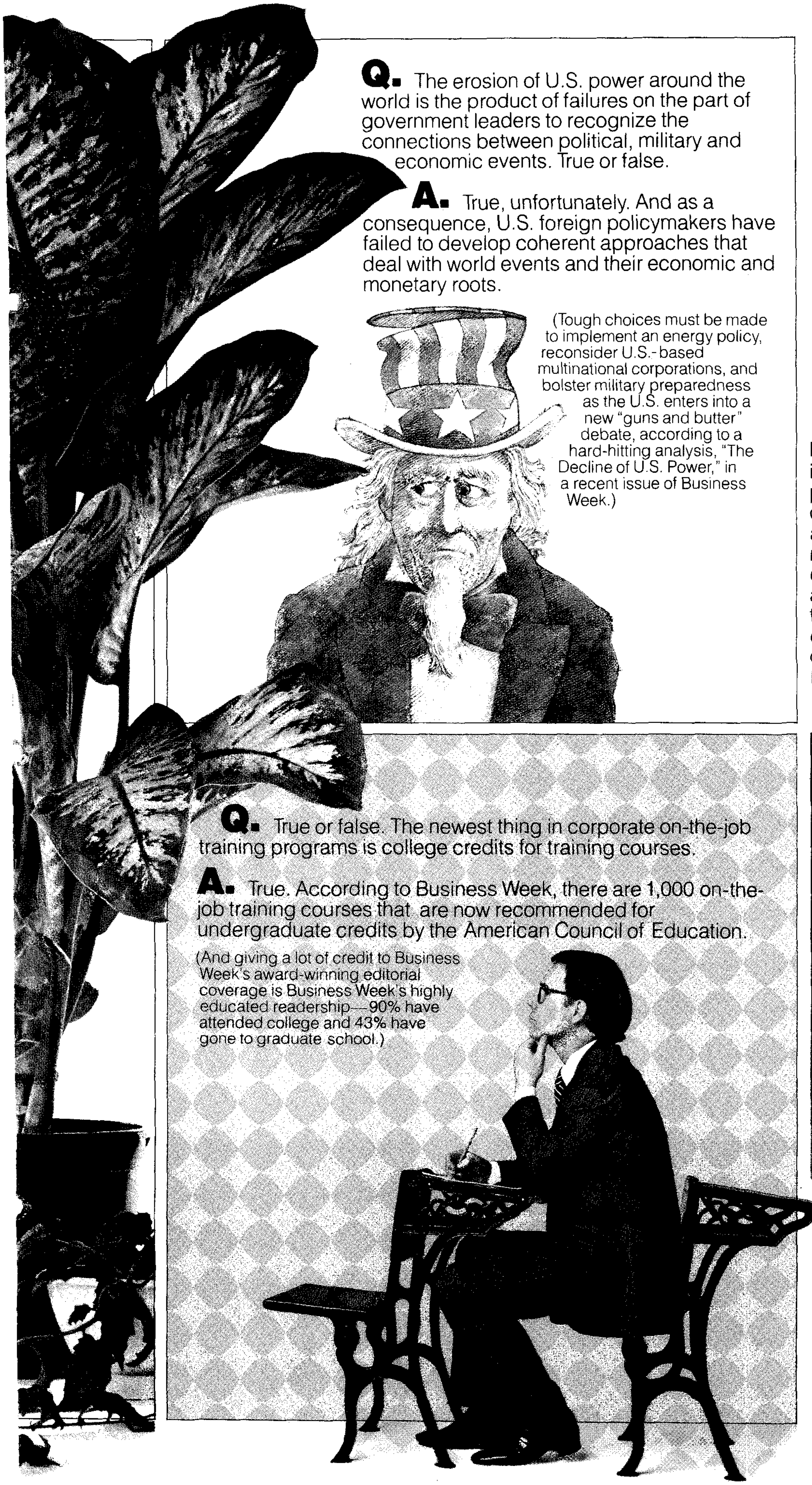

Q. The erosion of U.S. power around the world is the product of failures on the part of government leaders to recognize the connections between political, military and economic events. True or false.

A. True, unfortunately. And as a consequence, U.S. foreign policymakers have failed to develop coherent approaches that deal with world events and their economic and monetary roots.

(Tough choices must be made to implement an energy policy, reconsider U.S.-based multinational corporations, and bolster military preparedness as the U.S. enters into a new "guns and butter" debate, according to a hard-hitting analysis, "The Decline of U.S. Power," in a recent issue of Business Week.)

Q. True or false. The newest thing in corporate on-the-job training programs is college credits for training courses.

A. True. According to Business Week, there are 1,000 on-the-job training courses that are now recommended for undergraduate credits by the American Council of Education.

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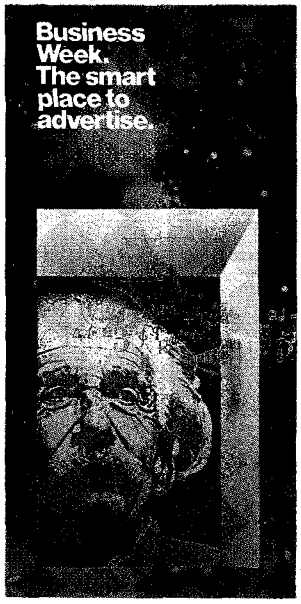

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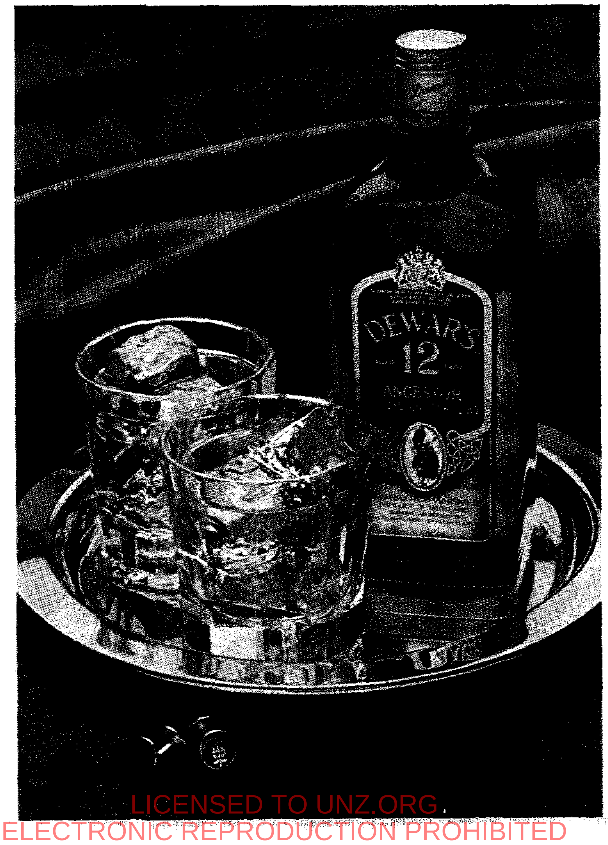

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Koran. Some salukis set up a howling clamor, and Salim told the story of how he had become a saluki breeder. He had owned a bitch named Rashrash in the nineteen-forties, and one day he met some Saudi merchants coming up the wadi, herding horses to sell in Egypt. They had a hunting falcon and a male saluki with them, too. The saluki hung around to mate with Rashrash, and that was the beginning of Salim's noisy kennel. Since the subject was dogs, I asked if they would like to hear a tape recording of Igra, my golden Labrador retriever, singing along to the "Marseillaise." (My dog likes to sing to Berlioz' arrangement of the "Marseillaise" even more than to Mahler's Second Symphony; I had taped her performance while testing my recorder before leaving home.) Igra's wailing to the anthem elicited mixed reactions: the consumptive boy was absolutely enchanted; the others simply stared at the machine with bemused smiles, nodding their heads; the salukis immediately stopped their howling, as if they sensed a greater talent among them. For me, the musical interlude lent a fine touch of surrealism to the already haunting scene—another culture collision to round out the day.

BAILEY produced his own tape recorder, with the intention of taping some Bedouin poetry and oral history before dinner. I excused myself and took a walk up the wadi in the dying light. It was the quintessential moment. Never had my feeling of connection to the Sinai been so strong. The wadi and the plain were changing from minute to minute into ever-darker shades of purple, which created the illusion of the rock walls closing in on me. I picked my way around a booth covered with caper plants (probably a way station providing some small shade), a disdainful camel, some acacia trees (holding in their upper branches, booby-trapped with deadly thorns, family supplies and possessions wrapped in tent fabric), and an indistinct mound, which turned out to be a lone Bedouin prostrating himself for his sundown prayers, facing southeast, toward Mecca. I stopped short, not wanting to intrude further into the supplicant's devotions—so quiet, so personal, so total—and yet by just standing there, staring, I was intruding. I walked on in a wide circle behind him.

Long before the emergence of Islam, the Bedouins had followed religious patterns of their own design—superstitions, really, based on their star lore, animism, and practical desert laws and customs. They believed in unlucky astrological periods—when, for instance, the moon is in conjunction with Libra, Sagittarius, and Scorpio. To this day, many Bedouins (the older ones, especially) will not attempt a difficult task, a journey, a raid, or sexual intercourse during such periods. (It is believed that a child conceived during unfavorable times will be retarded.) There are poems spelling out each of the astrological prohibitions.

The British Arabist Professor Edward H. Palmer, in his wanderings about the Sinai, made a detailed study of the Bedouins' extant pre-Islamic superstitions and rituals. He found, among other things, that the Bedouins have long believed that a great spirit created man first, and then gave him camels, goats, sheep, and donkeys for his use, along with time and seasons. When man forgets this god, the serpent will sting him—although a *hawi*, a venom-proof medicine man, may be called upon to neutralize the sting. They have long believed, too, in the end of the world and a general resurrection, with the good able to repel attacking vultures and the bad helpless before the eye-pecking birds. Charms and philtres prepared from animals can help ward off such cataclysmic hazards; for example, if a vulture is killed and buried for forty days, then boiled until its flesh is gone, the first white bone can be used to summon a genie, who will reveal wonderful secrets of nature and survival, including aphrodisiacs. Burned owl feathers and boiled hyena flesh also bring about miraculous cures. The revered rabbit and the leopard, considered to have been human in an earlier life, cannot be eaten. A mythical, never seen creature called the *hudhud* (because it is heard in the mountains crying "Hud hud") is also man's brother and must never be disturbed. Even after the Bedouins enthusiastically adopted Islam, some still performed non-Muslim prayers rooted in old superstition. When a man awakens in the morning, the spirit of god is on his right shoulder and the devil is on his left. He must pray and sprinkle himself with water, otherwise the devil will be with him all day long. The same ritual must be performed at sunset, too, to protect him for the night.

I followed the intermittent stream up the wadi, the camel droppings and slimy vegetation in the water filling the air with a thick, fetid smell. The only sounds were the erratic bubbling of the stream, the chirping of crepuscular birds, and the salukis calling to each other with echoing howls. I could al-

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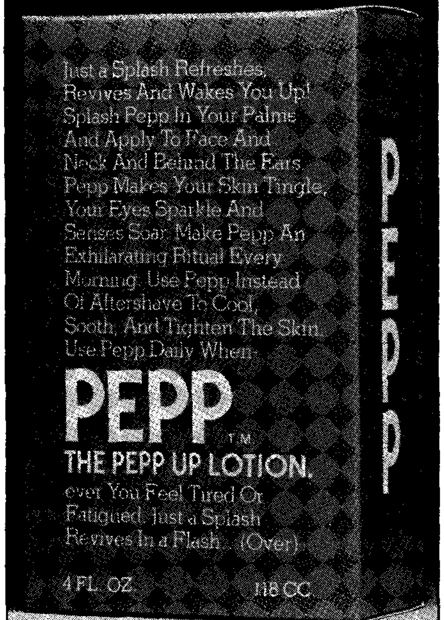
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most hear a celestial light switch click as the cloudless, moonless sky suddenly flashed with stars: the brightest firmament I had ever seen. I felt insignificant and alone in space—the way every Bedouin must feel much of the time—and I recalled what Bailey had told me about the Bedouin philosophy of existence in the wilderness. It can be summarized as "I against my brother, my brother and I against our cousin, my brother and I and our cousin against the world." The harshness of life, of course, demands this departmentalization of loyalties—individual, family, clan, tribe. Blood feuds continue until the fifth generation, unless they are settled by a *sulha*. Memories are long in the desert. The Bedouin has both dependency on and distrust of his neighbor—a kind of built-in suspicion usually absent in settled, policed communities. Since he rarely extends himself past the tribe, nationalism or regionalism hardly matters. He doesn't take political sides, as a rule, and because he acknowledges no earthly master outside the tribe he can never be truly conquered. His fundamental quest in life is for food and shelter, on the simplest subsistence level. Mere subsistence is an end in itself. More than that a Bedouin does not generally covet. Great ambition is alien to him. (The present-day Saudi Bedouins are a glaring exception.) The compulsive emphasis on hospitality is really a tit-for-tat posture. Without it, he would never be able to herd his livestock far from home, or go to market, or seek refuge in hard times. Because he usually has (or wants) so little, generous sharing is tantamount to an act of bravery, the mark of a man. The town Arab does not need this posture, this show, and that is why he and the Bedouin loathe each other. Ibn Khaldun, the fourteenth-century historian and promulgator of Arab civilization, was of two minds about the Bedouins: on the one hand, he respected them for their courage and simplicity; on the other hand, he derided them for being unmanageable, ignorant nomads. He wrote in "The Mukaddimah" that they were "the most savage human beings that exist. Compared with sedentary people, they are on a level with wild, untameable animals and dumb beasts of prey." Yet William Foxwell Albright, the noted contemporary American Biblical scholar, has said, in "Archaeology and the Religion of Israel," that the Bedouins "are the heirs of over thirty centuries of camel-nomadism and of some thirteen centuries of Islam," adding, "They reflect the most highly developed pride of race and family. The most ignorant and the wildest Bedawi may be capable of displaying courtly manners and unexpected eloquence. The Bedawi tradition of freedom and culture is so high that the humblest tribesman considers himself immeasurably superior to the peasant and even to the semi-nomad—who in his turn despises the peasant. On their part, the peasants may hate the Bedouin and call them 'wild beasts,' but they admire them all the same, and Arab oral literature is full of their praise."

HOMING in on the glow from Salim's campfire, I made my way back down the wadi to the booth and dinner. The dim glow from other campfires around the plain gave an eerie, extraterrestrial quality to the night—that Sinai moonscape again. I stopped at the Land-Rover and was surprised to discover that it was unlocked. Bailey had made a point of always locking the car, even if we were away from it for only a few minutes. He appeared beside me through the shadows, and I asked him why he had left the car open. He said it would be an insult to our hosts to lock it, even though he was leery of the El Arish merchants. "We'll be up at first light, anyway, before the Arishiya have a chance to swipe anything," he said. From our box of Elath-supermarket provisions, he took out cans of kosher chicken soup ("It's Friday night, isn't it?") and something called turkey balls. They would be added to Salim's stew (Salim's permission having already been granted), and, together with fresh pita and sugared tea, that would be our dinner. There was no freshly slaughtered goat—just a plain potluck meal. I fished out a bottle of Scotch from my rucksack and took two long pulls from it. The undiluted whiskey had never tasted so good. I was suffused with inner warmth and peace, and I offered some to Bailey, who, of course, shook his head regretfully.

We walked to the carpet spread out near the fire, and I watched one of Salim's older sons prepare the pita. He was kneading a large blob of flour-and-water dough into a family-size pizza. When he was satisfied with its diameter and texture, he simply threw it onto the fire, brushing hot coals over it with a stick. Almost immediately, it smelled delicious. Then, about ten minutes later, with his bare hand he turned the pita over, repeating the ember-covering process. The bread was charcoal-black in spots and looked like a flat, round dish made of scorched plaster. Mean-

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while, Salim stirred the stew over the fire in a big brass pot, the heady traces of chicken soup, turkey balls, and, I guessed, lamb mixing strangely in the night air. The other Bedouin adults were settling their accounts with the merchants for a few purchased items of clothing and food, doling out with precision and ceremony their Israeli pound notes, one by one. The Arishiya just as carefully re-counted the bills after they were handed them. Words of thanks were exchanged, and everyone at last took his place on the carpet.

The younger boys were not only allowed but encouraged to sit in on adult male activities, just as the younger girls tended the flocks with their mothers. There is no Bedouin generation gap. I noticed that when the consumptive boy displayed a certain boredom while waiting for dinner—he idly rapped a twig against an empty can—his punishment was just a "tsk-tsk" from Salim, and the child instantly stopped the rapping. This gentle discipline is in marked contrast to the manner of town Arabs, who, with more children, in tighter quarters, tend to be irritable toward their young and often beat them. It was Bailey's theory that since the Bedouins lead an outdoor, measured life, the children know instinctively how far they can go, so the parents are more patient.

As a rule, only one out of every ten Bedouin boys attends school regularly, and almost none of the girls do. (The Israelis provide the schools but do not press for total attendance.) There is no tradition of formal education. In the Bedouin culture of subsistence and survival, education comes from the elders, who teach the child in the field, as it were, by example and imitation. Consequently, few Bedouins learn to read and write, which accounts for the emphasis on oral history, law, literature, and entertainment. One of Bailey's missions in life is to set down on paper the oral history of the rich Bedouin culture. He feels that no time should be lost, because, as more and more sons leave the fold to work in towns, the lore of their fathers may be forgotten. The time-honored Bedouin routine of herding animals, raiding to supplement income, and perhaps growing produce to eat and sell is in danger of fading away, too—all the more reason for the elders to fear formal education. One famous case in point involved a brilliant young Bedouin man who, with tribal backing, was sent off to England for medical training. He received his degree and emigrated to California, where he is currently attached to a

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hospital. He wrote home that he missed the Sinai but, even so, he could not see his way clear to return. It will be a long time before another young man is sent off by the tribe for advanced education.

A thin white candle was lit near the campfire, and dinner was proclaimed ready. The candle was an uncommon addition to the evening meal. It was in our honor, as was the ceremonial presentation of a separate tin pan of stew and a large hunk of pita to Bailey and me. The protocol of hospitality behind this was that, as guests, we could eat all we wanted, without having to worry about leaving enough food for the others, who would eat out of the brass cooking pot. Following Bailey's example, I broke off a small piece of pita and, using it as a spoon, covered a larger piece with stew. The pita was harder and denser than oven-baked bread, but crisp and fresh. The stew was savory—although I found it difficult to identify any individual ingredient—and especially good when eaten with the pita. Once we began to eat, the others joined in, slowly and silently. There was no dinner conversation. Several glasses of sweet, warm tea helped wash the heavy victuals down.

When we all had finished, the pan and the brass pot were given to the salukis, who licked them clean. It would be the only cleaning they would get; when the dogs were no longer interested in them, the utensils were put away for the next meal. Cigarettes were distributed after dinner—not the Time brand but scraggly hand-rolled ones, filled with tobacco from a pouch belonging to one of the Arishiya. The cigarettes smelled unmistakably like marijuana, although the filler could have been just powerful Turkish tobacco. I was offered one and tried to smoke it—my first cigarette in ten years. It had no more effect on me than my pipe tobacco does, but the odor would have raised the eyebrows of any narc.

A general drowsiness overtook everyone but Salim and Bailey, who were energetically discussing Bedouin poetry and oral law. Salim's keen memory for legal-precept rhymes and other verse prompted Bailey to write down by the light of the candle everything Salim said. The others, their eyes half closed, seemed intoxicated by the recitations (and, perhaps, their cigarettes), repeating and caressing the rhyming syllables—"ee" and "aydee" and "eesh" and "eem"—their faces full of wonder at how the poet came up with the exact rhyme and yet preserved the meaning. Salim's other verses, not about the law, were mainly poems of longing, courage, despair, and, oddly, loneliness. Every element of the Bedouins' life has a standard poetic symbol—war, revenge, the seasons, childbirth, death—and the poets who created these symbols are legendary heroes, known to all. Indeed, one of the loftiest hopes one Bedouin can wish another is for the birth of a poet in his family.

No audience at a 92nd Street Y reading was ever as rapt as this one. But at last the listeners succumbed to sleep: first the children, wrapping themselves in threadbare blankets and rags; then the Arishiya, burrowing into their rough bedding, taken from burlap sacks; then, one by one, the Bedouin men, a few even nodding off as they sat cross-legged before the failing fire; and, finally, I myself, crawling into my sleeping bag at nine o'clock, my feet pointing west, away from the dawn. I lay supine, staring straight up at the stars, barely conscious of Salim's and Bailey's voices, of the reverberant saluki repartee, of the snoring and coughing and flatulence and borborygmus of the sleepers, of the camels chewing cud, of an owl hooting, of a hawk whistling. I imagined being one of the Israelite host, camped here in the night rapture of the Sinai with the flocks and friendly fellow-Semites, pondering a new, stringent set of laws, a vague, unfulfilled promise, and a confusing God. This must have been the way it was, I thought as I fell asleep.

I don't remember how many times I woke up during the soft, sweet night—certainly more than five. The first time, I know, was occasioned by the sound of sand being brushed aside near me. Blinking awake, I saw Salim smoothing out a spot on the ground for Bailey's sleeping bag, the way a father might prepare a bed for his favorite son. Another time, a lip-smacking camel almost stepped on me. I was also jolted out of my dreams by flashes of light, which turned out to be those stroboscopic Sinai stars. Once, I saw a brilliant flaming meteor, or maybe a piece of a man-made satellite intrusively plunging to earth. The last time I awoke was to the first light of dawn. Facing west did not make for longer morning sleep at Ein El Furtaga. The burnt-orange reflection of the sun on the canyon walls was so strong, so splendid, that to close one's eyes again would have been a profanation.

IT was just before five o'clock. A few of the others were stirring, and Salim, the last to retire, was already up and about, starting the campfire for breakfast. He nodded to me and smiled; I nodded and smiled back. We stood side by side and watched the bright-orange dawn bring the wadi to life. Salim had spent just about every morning of his existence in this place, and yet his fascination with the new day was probably stronger than mine. The sounds of coughing and spitting by the other risers—smokers' hack, mostly—dissolved the lovely moment. I walked down to the unlocked Land-Rover to see if anything was missing. Everything was in order—even Bailey's pistol, hidden under the front seat. An old man who had shared dinner with us the night before was at morning prayer: standing, kneeling, prostrating himself, standing, kneeling, prostrating himself—a solitary, mystical morning exercise. A saluki nibbled at a fresh pile of camel dung—his breakfast. Nothing is wasted in the desert.

I watched the breakfast pita and tea being prepared—the pita as the night before, the tea and sugar in equal measures, mixed with water and boiled in the blackened brass teapot. Bailey was awake, and I saluted him with my first question of the day: Since Bedouins never seem to shave, why don't their beards progress beyond stubble? It was too early for an answer to such an obtuse question. "I don't know," he mumbled. There was a new face at the campfire, a tall, young Bedouin wearing a Rolex watch and missing two fingers on his left hand. He had arrived during the night with his camel, whose teeth were the cause of his missing fingers. Bedouins love Rolex watches as much as they distrust (but prize) camels. I observed his camel for a moment, that comical, stupid, vicious beast indispensable for transportation and, sometimes, food. After the age of six, when their mouths are as tough as leather, they can make do on almost any forage. Their ability to go without fresh supplies of water is desert legend. They can endure boredom, hobbling, beatings, and their own smell with dumb stoicism, and then, when their owners least expect it, violently rebel—as unpredictable as the Middle East itself.

The breakfast was simple and invigorating—pita dipped in tea. The sun rose swiftly, and with it came a mixed chorus of birds, including the sand-colored thrush called the *bulbul* and, to everybody's pleasure, the cackling partridge. The Bedouins welcome the cackle of the partridge because it heralds spring. There is a sly saying that, in effect, goes like this: When the par-

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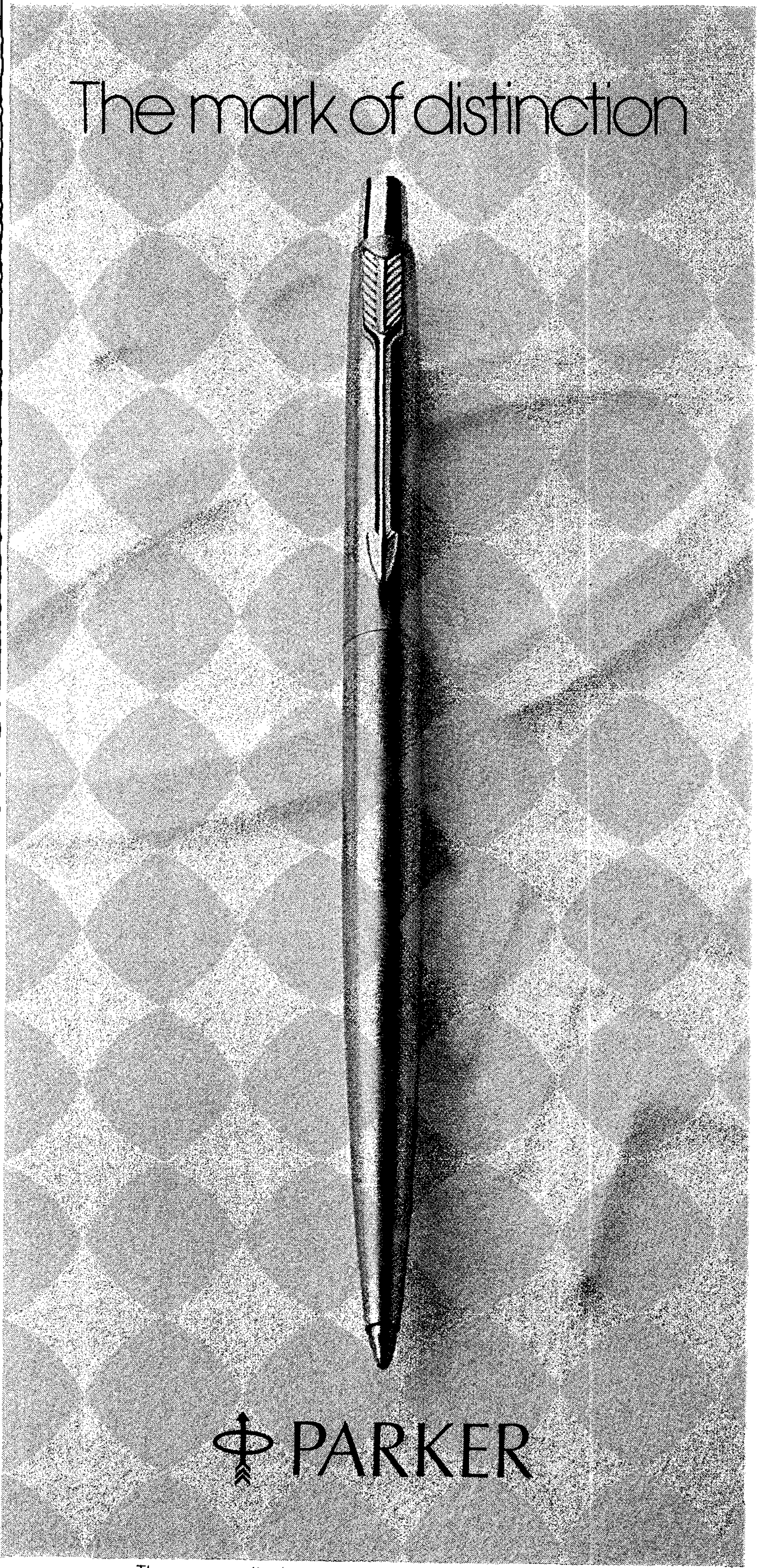

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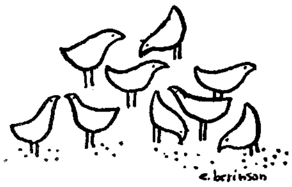
tridge begins to cackle and neighbor visits neighbor and the embers of the fire last until the morning and the night is not too long, those who say they've looked for fresh pasture and not found it are liars. The partridge is cackling, the winter is over, and the camps are empty because there is new forage to be had.

Just after six o'clock and four glasses of tea, Bailey and I prepared to leave camp. We packed our gear, checked the Land-Rover, and filled our canteens at a spot where the stream re-emerged from the ground, near a protective ledge. "You see that ledge," Bailey said. "A few years ago, I brought my wife and sons here at Passover. We set up camp and held our Seder at this very spot, in the open. Salim slaughtered a paschal lamb and baked the real matzo, pita, and it was the greatest Seder since the original one. I'll never forget it. We had a magnificent experience." Bailey and I walked back to Salim's booth and offered *shukrans* and handshakes all around. I wanted to offer something more substantial for my remarkable stay at Furtaga, but that is not done. Perhaps if I could arrange for a doctor to see the consumptive boy soon . . . No, as Bailey had told me so many times, I was being a missionary.

WE struck out for Mt. Sinai and St. Catherine's Monastery—from Ein El Furtaga a half-hour helicopter ride, perhaps, but a long, tortuous trip through rough country by Land-Rover. On the map, the most direct route was through Wadi Ghazala, off Wadi Watir, to Ein Khudra (the alleged site of Hazeroth, meaning "fences," where the Israelites had once camped), but nobody was sure how clear the wadi road was. We reasoned that it would be quicker and safer to return to the coast road and head west into the interior over the more travelled Wadi Saal. And more travelled it was. It seemed that every tourist in the Sinai was on the wadi road to Mt. Sinai for the weekend: American Christian Bible-study groups in blue Egged Tours buses, kibbutz children in trucks, some dauntless folk in ordinary cars (most of which were stalled at the side of the road with flat tires and overheated radiators), and a convoy of five G.M.C. vans, operated by Johnny's Desert Tours, crammed with hardy, elderly Europeans. One of the Johnny's Desert Tours drivers recognized Bailey and stopped near us to talk. He said that he had already been to the Mt. Sinai area and that it was inundated with tourists. Besides the ones coming overland, fifteen Arkia (the Israel domestic airline) flights had put in at the small Mt. Sinai Airport. All the sightseers had been turned away by the monks of St. Catherine's, who refused them permission even to enter the monastery grounds, let alone spend the night at the monastery hostel. Bailey and I wondered whether our letters of introduction to the monks would work. The more travellers we saw, the more we despaired.

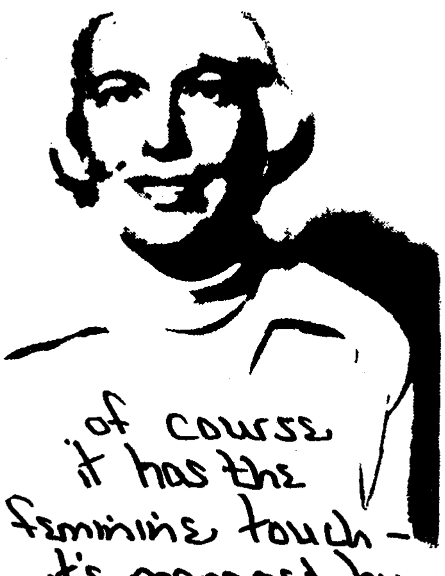
The morning haze was quickly baked off by the sun, and it was hot in the wide, windless wadi. Oblivious to the heat, however, was a Bible-study group sitting in a circle before Ein Khudra, reverently reading Old Testament passages and attentively listening to the tour leader's lecture on Hazeroth. He recounted the story, in Numbers 12, of how the Israelites stopped at Hazeroth after suffering one of God's plagues for their greed and discontent. While there, Miriam and Aaron spoke against their brother Moses, "for he had married an Ethiopian woman." The Lord appeared before the slandering siblings in the form of a pillar of a cloud and visited leprosy upon Miriam, until she was "white as snow." Moses interceded with God in Miriam's behalf, and after seven days she was cured and allowed back into the camp. Then the Israelites moved on to Kadesh Barnea. As the story was told, the Bible students followed the passages, before the sandstone rocks that might once have been the fences of Hazeroth, and their faces shone in the sun. I have rarely seen people look so transported, so radiant.



Wadi Saal is named for the acacia trees that grow abundantly about its broad floor. What with the dangerous acacia thorns (capable of puncturing a tire as surely as a six-inch spike), the paucity of shade, the tourist traffic, and Egyptian vultures (familiarly known as Pharaoh's chickens) constantly circling overhead, it had none of the charm and beauty of Wadi Watir. It does possess a geological phenomenon, however, called *sawan wa elmaz*, or "flint with diamonds"—a stone looking like a curious dried fruit, which when split open reveals a dazzling cluster of quartz. Bedouins have been known to sell these stones to the credulous as rough diamonds. The wadi is also the location of an Israeli experiment in upgrading Bedouin agriculture, with government-sponsored wells, plastic pipes, and fenced-in plots available to those relatively few Bedouins who wish to till the soil. (A favorite Bedouin proverb still is "When the plow crosses the threshold, manhood departs.") The Israeli experiment was the brainchild of a legendary civil administrator of the Sinai named Moshe Sela, whom everybody calls Moshe Vehetzi ("Moses and a Half"), because of his height. He became a Sinai legend as a result of his selfless dedication to Bedouin welfare and improvement. It was said that he could perform miracles, even when dealing with such a formidable force as the Israeli bureaucracy. We hoped to look him up at the Civil Administration Center near the monastery.

BUT first there was a mixed bag of sights to see; for instance, the Mt. Sinai Airport, a trig, modern airfield that would be a credit to any small American city, situated about twenty kilometres north of its namesake. Developed from an old military landing strip in a broad wadi, it had eight Arkia planes lined up on the tarmac, discharging and taking on passengers. The airport, more than anything else, has been responsible for the latest invaders of the Sinai—the legions of tourists who were making life miserable for the St. Catherine's monks—by reducing what was once a difficult safari into the Mt. Sinai area to just a short flight from Tel Aviv or Jerusalem. The airport lies before the eruption of jagged red granite high peaks rising south of the Watiya Pass, the scene of the last great intertribal war, between the bellicose Sawalha and Aleigat tribes, in the tenth century. Control of the vital pass meant control over this south-central region of glorious heights and venerated holy places.

Not all the holy places are Christian and Jewish. South of the Watiya Pass and not far from St. Catherine's is the tomb of Nebi Saleh, a plain, white-washed domed building often described as the Mecca of Sinai. Just who Nebi Saleh was is still a moot point. The holiest saint for the south-Sinai Bedouins—collectively spoken of as the Towara, or People of Tor (the Mountain)—may or may not have predated Islam. Professor Palmer believed that this righteous prophet may have been the progenitor of the Sawalha tribe, a charismatic sheikh whose miracles—such as producing a she-camel from a rock near the Mt. Sinai summit, the



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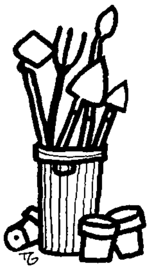
"footprint" of which is still evident—were adopted by Muhammad during his visit to the Sinai. The exploits of Nebi Saleh were confused by the Bedouins with the deeds of Muhammad, as well as with acts ascribed to Moses and Elijah. It could be said that Nebi Saleh is a Bedouin distortion of the tales credited to all these holy men.

Whatever the case, the tomb itself is the site of annual feasts held by the Towara tribes. The celebrating Bedouins cover themselves with dust from the tomb for good luck, sacrifice sheep, race camels to the ululating of the women, bury their dead and pray near the tomb, and, after all that, mount a *mesamerah,* or fantasia, with dancing, singing, hand-clapping, animal imitations, and a gargantuan feast, often consisting of a roasted camel stuffed with a roasted sheep stuffed with a roasted goat. There was no celebration taking place at the tomb when I stopped by, but a few Bedouins were praying outside and placing humble offerings (bits of cloth, wild flowers, and candles) inside. As they entered the tomb, they recited the traditional prayer "There is no God but Allah, and Muhammad is His Prophet," and prostrated themselves before the shrouded catafalque facing Mecca, which indicated that, whether or not Nebi Saleh predated Islam, he was certainly a Muslim now.

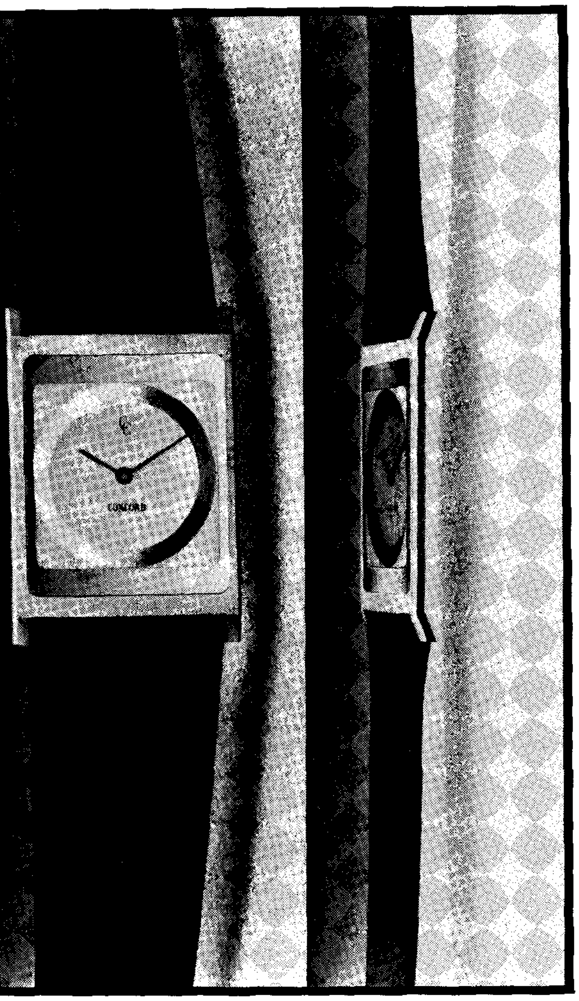


Passing buses crowded with sweaty, disappointed travellers returning to the airport from the closed monastery, and happier Israeli youngsters setting up tents in camping grounds, we bumped down the road toward Mt. Sinai, the goal of countless thousands since the Exodus. Before us was the Plain of Raha, the vast, baked flats where the Israelites had camped and doubted and grumbled while awaiting the theophany and lawgiving from the Mount. Could the Plain of Raha have held the entire Israelite host? Perhaps. But could this arid stretch of sand and stone have supported them and their livestock for more than a few days, without constant life-giving miracles? And, for that matter, was this area the site of the true Mt. Sinai? The Exodus—one of the world's greatest and best-known tales of survival, freedom, and revelation—is still a subject of heated debate among scholars, the most contentious event in the Old Testament. Who was where and with what and with whom can, and probably will, be argued till doomsday.

Apart from all the wilder speculations on Exodus wanderings, the theories can be broken down into two basic geographical concepts: the southern, or traditional, route and the northern, or scientific, one. As every Sunday-school child knows, the southern route has Moses and the Israelites fleeing Egypt through the parted Red Sea, somewhere in the vicinity of the Bitter Lakes, near present-day Ismailia. After the sea waters closed in on their Egyptian pursuers, the Israelites proceeded southeast along the Sinai coast, past the springs of Marah and Elim, through the oases of Wadi Firan, and then on to Mt. Sinai, Hazeroth, Kadesh Barnea, and, decades later, the Promised Land. The northern route is the conception of the academics, the scientists, who reason that the Israelites crossed not the Red Sea but the Reed Sea (*Yam Suf* in Hebrew). This, they argue, could well be the reedy, marshy El Tina Flats and the Bardawil Lagoon along the northern Mediterranean coast. The lagoon, especially, could be considered a separate sea, because it is divided from the Mediterranean by a narrow, curving spit of sand, along which the Israelites might have travelled. During severe storms, the sand spit is often breached by the Mediterranean, and the unwary—say, Egyptian soldiers riding in heavy chariots—could be engulfed and drowned. This would leave the Israelites free to roam through the dunes of the northeastern Sinai to Gebel Halal (the northern-route "Mt. Sinai"), Kadesh Barnea, and, ultimately, Canaan.

The northern-route theorists offer all sorts of logical points to back up their argument. For instance, quail, which God provided for the hungry wanderers, are more plentiful in the north than in the south. Manna—thought to be the sweet, small whitish deposit left on the ground after certain scale insects feed on the tamarisk tree—is also abundant in the north. Sinai Bedouins call it *mann* and still use it as a sweetener. Migrating quail fall from exhaustion on the strand near the Bardawil Lagoon after crossing the Mediterranean on their way from Europe to Africa. The fat, oily birds seem to be divinely delivered, and they are easily caught in nets by the Bedouins and sold as delicacies. Other points supporting the argument are that Moses would have avoided the Egyptian soldiers garrisoned at the Serabit El Khadim turquoise mines, only fifty miles from Mt. Sinai; that the Lord's "pillar of a cloud" to guide the Israelites by day and the "pillar of fire" to guide them by night are common natural occurrences along the Mediterranean littoral in the spring, towering thunderheads moving west to east with night lightning; that just about every Exodus place name has an equivalent geographic name in the north (even Gebel Halal can be construed to mean "Mountain of the Lawful"). To these arguments, the southern-route traditionalists answer that theirs is the accepted route, more closely aligned with the Biblical text, especially in place names. Also, they say, the Bible clearly states that "God led them not through the way of the land of the Philistines"—the northern, Via Maris road—"although that was near; for God said, Lest peradventure the people repent when they see war, and they return to Egypt. But God led the people about, through the way of the wilderness of the Red Sea."

Perhaps the most unorthodox concept of the Exodus was suggested to me by Professor Zeev Meshel, the Tel Aviv University archeologist who explored the Judean religious center near El Kuntilla. "The Old Testament, as we know it today, is the work of different editors," Meshel had said, "and these editors made the place names very definite. One place name we can absolutely identify is 'the way of the land of the Philistines,' because that is surely the Via Maris. But the Philistines didn't even exist during the time of the Exodus, so the reference to them is an anachronism. There were invading armies and caravans using that route then which could have made trouble for the Israelites, but no Philistines. It is useless to identify Biblical place names." (The American Biblical scholar Edward Robinson concurred; he wrote dryly, "A tolerably certain method of finding any place at will is to ask an Arab if its name exists. He is sure to answer yes, and to point out some point at hand as its location. In this way, I have no doubt, we might have found a Rephidim, or Marah, or any place we chose.") Professor Meshel also suggested that the Israelites "stumbled" on the Promised Land—that while the Old Testament was being edited, "the fixed aim to Canaan" was added as an embellishment. Therefore, there could have been many routes and many Mt. Sinais. "It might have taken forty or four hundred years for them to find Canaan," Meshel said. "Old Egyptian records tell of tribes searching for water in dry years and emigrating in better times. Perhaps there were several exoduses from Egypt, each migration wandering in the desert until good land was found, as the Bedouins wander today. The Israelites were nomads in Sinai and their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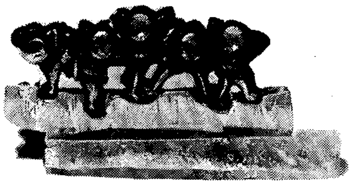

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habits were similar to the Bedouins'."

The similarity between the Israelites and the Bedouins is what might be termed the Moses-Jethro link. According to the Bible, Moses, while a member of the Pharaoh's court, killed an Egyptian overseer who was beating a Hebrew slave. He fled for his life to the Sinai, and there he met Jethro (also known as Reuel), the Sheikh of Sheikhs of the Midianite tribe, whose territory covered both the east and the west sides of the Gulf of Akaba. He lived for years as a shepherd with Jethro and married Jethro's daughter Zipporah. More important, he was imbued with the natural mysteries of the Sinai and the revelation of a single, all-powerful God, through the appearance at the base of Mt. Horeb (an interchangeable Biblical name for Mt. Sinai) of the Burning Bush that was not consumed by flames. The voice of God spoke to him from the fire and instructed him to "bring forth my people the children of Israel out of Egypt." Faced with this awesome mission, Moses had to conceive a code of life for the survival of his people—burdened, as they were, with a slave mentality—once they had been delivered from bondage and were loose in the wilderness. This is where Jethro's influence came in. Jethro, through the years, had taught Moses the Bedouin rules for desert survival, tribal organization, and, some say, even the idea of monotheism. In a sense, Moses' Bedouin father-in-law was the prime earthly instrument in the Israelites' painful trek to freedom. Bailey saw yet a greater influence of Jethro on Moses. "When Moses led his basically urban, enslaved people into the Sinai, he had to mold them into a tough national entity," he told me. "If they were to survive, they would have to live by the rules of the desert. I believe that Moses learned these rules well from Jethro and adapted them into his own codes, as God-given. There are absolute parallels between the Bedouin desert codes and the Mosaic laws of the Torah—the same complicated, detailed regulations for living in the most primitive circumstances. For instance, I found that the Mosaic instruction about what to do if two men are arguing and a pregnant woman comes by and the unborn child is harmed as a result is straight from Bedouin law. I'm doing a great deal of work on these parallels to prove my point." And there is the obvious link between Bedouin hospitality and the Mosaic instruction that "the stranger that dwelleth with you shall be unto you as one born among you, and thou shalt love him as thyself."

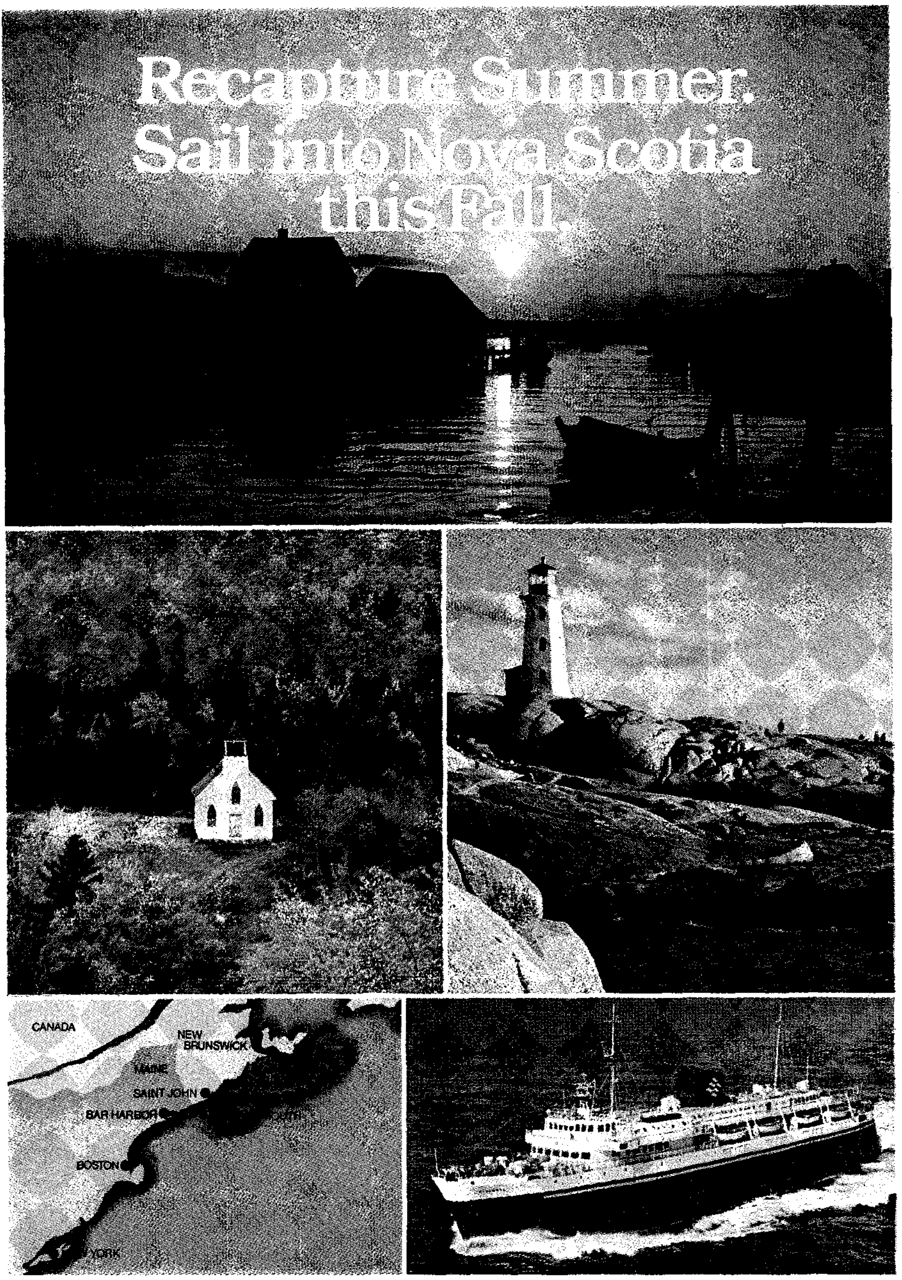
The contemporary Bedouins in the immediate Mt. Sinai area could hardly be further removed from Jethro's Midianites. They are the Jebeliya (People of the Mountains), a tribe descended from a hundred Walachian slaves dispatched to the Sinai by Emperor Justinian to serve the monks at St. Catherine's. Over the years, they married Egyptian women and were converted to Islam; however, they were never accepted by other Sinai Bedouins, because they were somehow different: not purely Arabian in looks or breeding; loyal to the monks, and not to the Bedouin hierarchy; and too Westernized in thought and learning. As we drove by some Jebeliya on our way to the Civil Administration Center, I noticed—or imagined I noticed—a different look to them. They seemed taller than other Bedouins, and a few had brown hair and blue eyes. Adept at rough-stone construction, they have built sturdy granaries on the mountainsides. The majority of them live in tents throughout the region or in the monastery itself. Intermingled with these stone granaries are retreat houses owned by the monastery.

WE arrived at the kibbutzlike compound of the Civil Administration Center, an outpost of modern Israel in the midst of antiquity. The compound consisted of an office, barracks, mess hall, repair shops, garage, school, clinic, and twenty-five extremely serious Israeli administrators and ten industrious Jebeliya mechanics, cooks, and menial laborers. We asked to see Moshe Sela and learned that he was no longer with the Civil Administration but had fallen victim, at last, to the bureaucracy. A strikingly beautiful Israeli woman named Leki (government and military personnel in sensitive areas usually disclose only their first names, for security reasons) was temporarily in charge following Sela's ouster. She and her assistant, a dark-skinned Indian-born girl named Leah, agreed to talk to us when they weren't shouting into the microphone of a cranky radio, which maintained sporadic communication between the center and the administrators in the field. (They were having particular difficulty raising somebody called "Rootie"—Ruthie, I assumed—and our entire conversation was punctuated by cries of "Rootie! Rootie!")

The first question for Leki that came to mind was, What's a beautiful woman like you doing in a place like this? The answer, given with just the hint of a flattered smile, was that she had lost her husband in the 1973 Yom Kippur War and wanted to get away from Israel proper. She had heard of the wonderful things Moshe Sela was doing for the Bedouins in the Sinai and decided to join the Civil Administration. "I love it here," she said, via Bailey's simultaneous translating. "We all do. We are very sensitive to the Bedouins' habits and culture. If we didn't get into the spirit and rhythm of this place, we couldn't live here. Our doctors, for example, are Army reservists assigned here, and they never fail to end up loving the duty. They treat the Bedouins both at the clinic and, by four-wheel-drive trucks, in their encampments. If the Bedouins are very sick, or in hard childbirth, they are sent to an Elath or Tel Aviv hospital. Our agricultural officers, too, spend days in the field with the Bedouins, showing them how to dig reinforced wells and grow better crops. We help just the Bedouins; not the monks or anybody else, unless there's an emergency. You see"—she gestured toward a Jebeliya cook, dressed in jeans and sneakers, working in the nearby kitchen—"we hire Bedouins, so we provide jobs and help the economy, also."

I asked her about Moshe Sela, and the very mention of his name filled her with emotion. "Everything we have done here in the southern Sinai at all our administration centers is due to him," she said. "Since 1968, he was many things to the Bedouins, including a kind friend, and he understood them. We have never had acts of sabotage or terror here, again thanks to him. Some people think we are too radically changing the Bedouin way of life by giving them good health, schooling, a better living, even electricity, but I don't think so. They have so little. They need so much help. How can it be wrong?"

The staff present at the compound was about to have lunch in the mess hall, and Bailey and I were invited to share it. The meal was better than the usual kibbutz fare: the famous Israeli Army "loaf" (pressed meatlike matter, not bad when heavily seasoned; Bailey had survived almost exclusively on "loaf" when he had served a four-month Army-reserve stint at an isolated post), a fresh salad, pot roast and gravy, sliced white bread, pickled tomatoes ("Just like Zabar's," said one of the staff who had lived in New York), apples, and tea. We and the civil administrators sat at a long table, shuttling the various dishes to each other, boarding-house fashion. At separate tables were the Jebeliya workers (the



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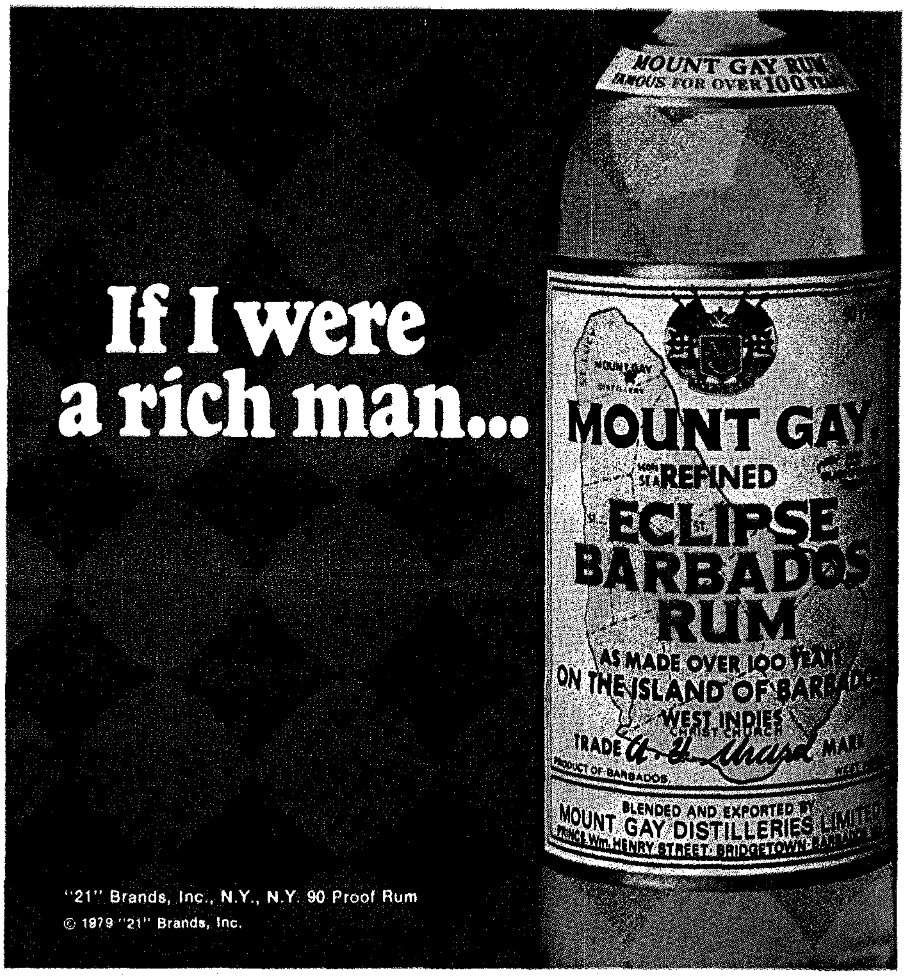

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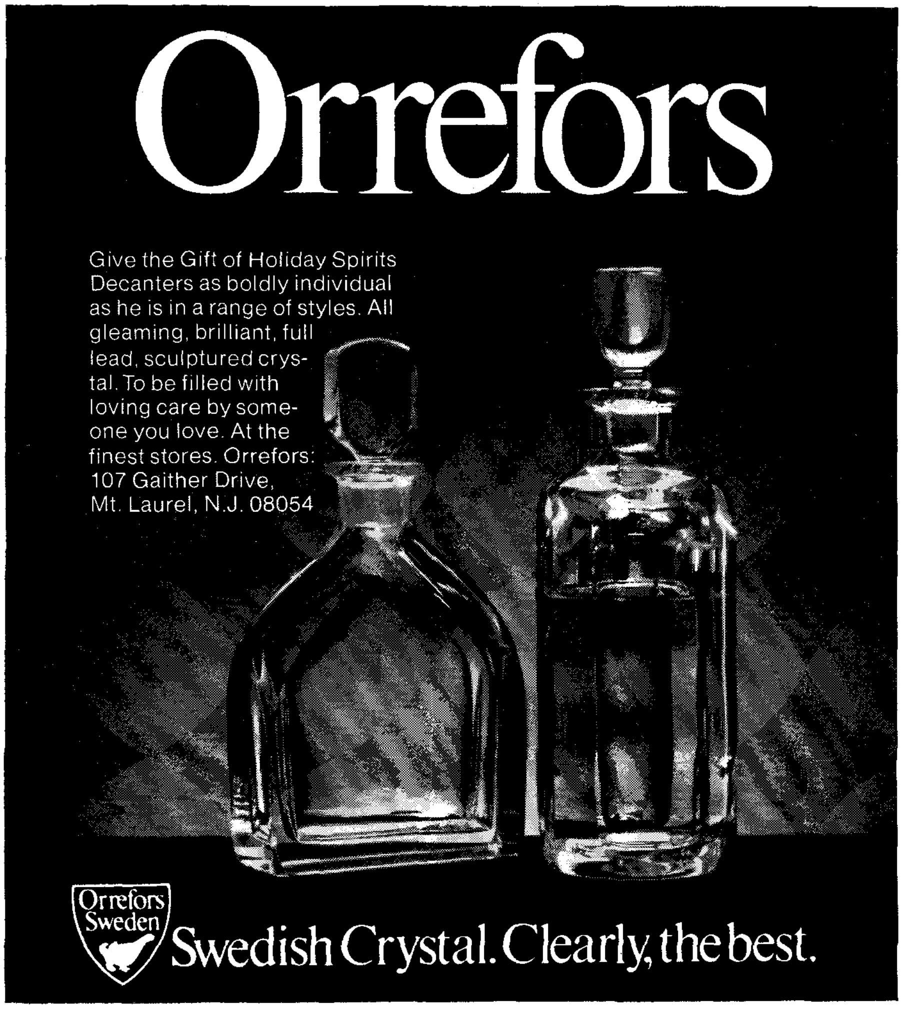

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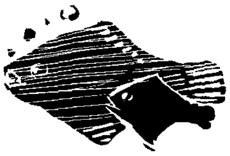
only Bedouins I had ever seen eating off plates, with knives and forks) and some English and French archeologists who, by arrangement, ate at the compound when they weren't digging at a nearby site. We all ate slowly and talked little, which is the best practice in the Sinai midday heat. One subject that came up for discussion was the latest news about an Israeli from Galilee nicknamed Abu Musa (Father Moses) by the Bedouins. He was described as a saintly, charitable man who had taken on the unpaid task of visiting Bedouins being treated at Israeli hospitals in order to help them with their problems, ease their culture shock, and generally comfort them. As far as anybody could tell, he did this simply because he liked Bedouins.

An old man sat down at our table, a bit late for lunch. His name was Mayani, and he had emigrated to Israel from Poland, becoming a master carpenter in Petah Tikva, a town outside Tel Aviv. He said that Moshe Sela had talked him into working as the carpenter for the Civil Administration, also teaching Bedouins the trade, and that he had never regretted moving here, although his family in Petah Tikva thought he was crazy. His Yiddish-accented Hebrew seemed to brighten everyone, and the tempo of conversation and joking increased. After lunch, we all helped to clean up. Every morsel of spilled food was scrupulously removed, the tables were scrubbed, and soon the mess hall was spotless. Bedouin workers did the heavier K.P. chores, and I suspected that the example of diligent hygiene was partly for their benefit. It seemed to work. There were very few Sinai flies about. The only plague was the incessant, droning diesel generator in an adjacent building. Apart from the generator, it was a pleasant lunch. Leaving the compound, I said to Bailey, "You see, not all missionaries are bad."

NOW it was time to mount a frontal assault on St. Catherine's. Those who had already tried and failed were making their way back down a rutted wadi road toward a Field School—a kibbutzlike retreat where they could spend the night. As the Land-Rover approached a stern-faced Jebeliya guard stationed at a thick chain strung across the road, I felt as if I were the latest extension of all the assaults on the fortress-monastery over the years. In the fourth century, the monks, anchorites, and pilgrims living in the vicinity of Empress Helena's Chapel of the Burning Bush were beset by Bedouin raiders, as were their fellow-believers in Firan. Ammonius, an Egyptian monk of the era, described in his journal how the "Saracens" attacked the Sinai settlement, plundering, defiling, eating holy wafers, and murdering thirty-eight before being frightened off by a fire on Mt. Sinai. Even Nubian nomads invaded from across the Red Sea, and slaughtered forty-one Christians, but they were eradicated by the Bedouins, for they had been trespassing on tribal lands. One hermit, it was said, turned himself into a palm tree to escape a party of raiders.

In order to stabilize his position in the Holy Land and protect the Christians, Emperor Justinian ordered the construction of a fortress to surround the Mt. Sinai church and settlement, in about 530. Five-foot-square granite blocks, many of them engraved with Maltese crosses, were stacked one upon another to form the outer walls, and towers fitted with covered ramparts for bowmen were constructed by imported masons. A completely self-contained town was erected within the walls surrounding the approximately eight-thousand-square-yard area, and, given the monastery's isolated situation, it was considered a man-made wonder. The only trouble was that its site was at the base of Mt. Sinai, a strategically unsound position for a fortress. According to Eutychius, a patriarch of Alexandria, the supervisor of the construction, one Doulas, built the monastery at the base of the mountain for the plentiful water found there and to spare the inhabitants from spooky thunder and other heavenly phenomena witnessed at night on the peak. For his solicitous, if unmilitary, concern, Doulas was executed by Justinian, once the Emperor heard about the blunder. Of course, all the Bedouin raiders had to do to harass the monastery was simply roll stones down the mountain right into the settlement. The Christians were still under siege much of the time.



Later, the church and monastery were rededicated to St. Catherine, who as a young girl in fourth-century Alexandria had been converted to Christianity by a Syrian monk. During the persecution of Christians by the Roman Emperor Maximian, she was tortured for her aggressive proselytizing by being strapped to revolving spiked wheels, which miraculously didn't tear her to pieces. (St. Catherine is the patron saint of wheelwrights.) She was, however, subsequently beheaded. After her elevation to sainthood, it was revealed to a Mt. Sinai monk that her body had been borne by angels to the highest peak in the Sinai Peninsula, just south of Mt. Sinai. The monks climbed to the top of the peak and discovered her bones there, along with a strange deposit of oil. They sequestered the bones near the altar of the Burning Bush and renamed both the monastery and the mountain peak in her honor. The bones, it was said, continued to exude oil, which was collected by the monks, who considered it a powerful and holy panacea. A cult of the virgin martyr Catherine swept Europe in the Middle Ages, and the monks of St. Catherine's were the recipients of lavish gifts from nobility, in return for some of her alleged finger bones and vials of the wondrous oil. Most of the priceless treasures in the monastery today date from the largesse associated with the cult, which waned somewhat in later years.

The Bedouins had an equally inventive version of how the monastery came to be dedicated. They told Professor Palmer that Nebi Musa (or Holy Moses, as it were) arrived in Sinai with the Israelites and, thankful for his deliverance from the Egyptians, decided to erect a house of worship to commemorate the event. The next morning, his chief mason found that all the tools had disappeared. Moses discovered the tools near the base of Mt. Sinai. Heeding the omen, he laid the foundation for the monastery, which was completed by his daughter—none other than a woman named St. Catherine. The Bedouins also believed that the monastery was under the special protection of Heaven, and anyone with evil designs upon it would be punished. This belief has been encouraged by the monks, who have been known to outfit the Bedouins with crosses to be worn as protective charms.

During the explosion of Islam, in the seventh century, the monastery was assailed by a new force, the Muslim hordes. Since the peninsula was, in effect, a province of the Hejaz, the Christians were barely tolerated and often oppressed. The Jebeliya were forcibly converted to Islam, along with a few less committed Christians, and the monastery's outbuildings were destroyed. It was said that a mosque was constructed by the monks within the monastery walls in honor of Muhammad's alleged visit as a boy to the area but, more likely, it was built as a means of protection against Muslim

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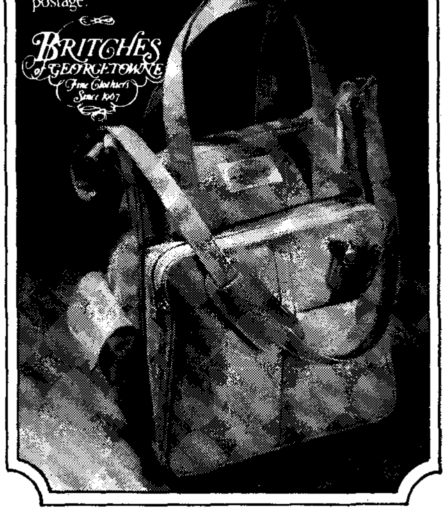

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raiders. (The story was also spread by the monks that Muhammad had later issued a firman of immunity from persecution to the monastery.) Another version has it that Muslim troops were so impressed by the monks' courage in the face of certain annihilation that their sultan ordered the monastery spared, provided that a mosque be erected on the place where Muhammad had once set foot. Actually, the mosque was built in the early eleven-hundreds for Muslim soldiers sent to the Sinai to fight the Crusaders. But for much of the Crusades the monastery was firmly under the shield of the Frankish knights, some of whose crests and names were carved on wooden doors and the refectory walls. Indeed, St. Catherine's thrived, receiving generous gifts from European rulers. After the Kingdom of Jerusalem fell, in 1187, Muslim permission was required for pilgrimages, but the monks enjoyed a ten-per-cent tax on all goods brought into El Tor, until the fifteenth century. Thereafter, the monastery became increasingly dependent on the Russian czars, who subsidized the monks in return for religious relics and art.

By the time Napoleon had conquered Egypt and the Sinai, at the end of the eighteenth century, the monastery was in a sad state of disrepair and disuse. Napoleon offered protection to the monks and sent General Jean Kléber on an expedition to survey St. Catherine's, where the General found only six bedraggled monks and twenty-two lay brothers in attendance. Floods had destroyed the eastern wall and some of the buildings, and so Kléber dispatched Cairene masons to renovate the structure. But the French had their own problems in the Sinai and soon withdrew, leaving the monks again in a tenuous position. Through it all, though, the monastery stood—never captured by infidels, always hanging on, sometimes by the frailest of threads. And through it all, too, the pilgrims came, the tourists of their eras. In the sixth century, as many as eight hundred were there at one time, causing the monks to complain about feeding them all. Sickness and plague afflicted them, and those who arrived over the desert as penitents withstood remarkable suffering. In the Middle Ages, it was the custom for murderers doing penance to go on pilgrimages bound in fetters forged from their murder weapons. Two Breton brothers who had killed their uncle were thus fettered and sent on a pilgrimage to Rome, Jerusalem, and St. Catherine's. Like manufactured Siamese twins, they arrived at the mon-

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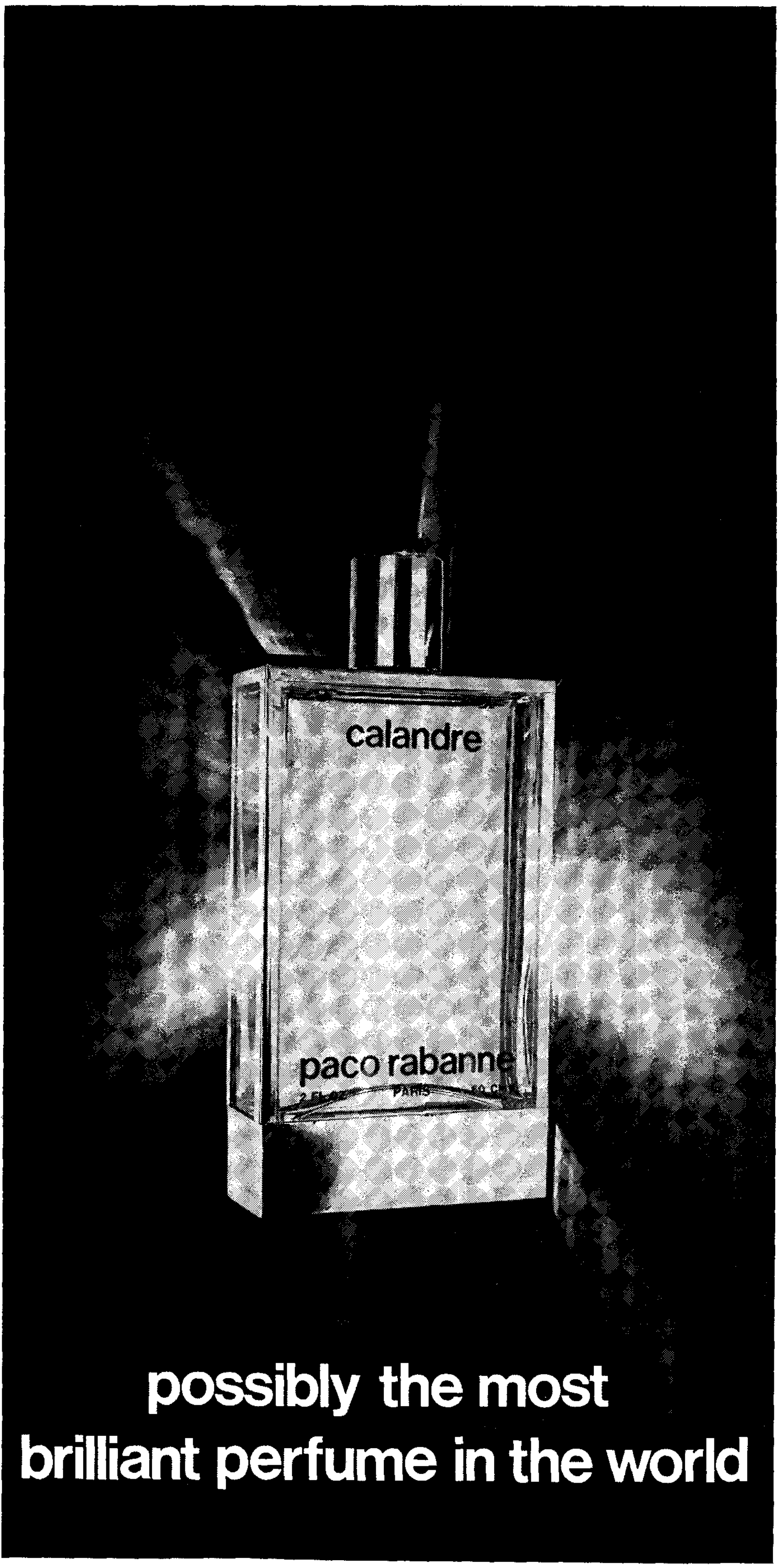
astery, climbed Mt. Sinai, and attempted to return to Brittany, still chained together. Whether or not they completed the round trip is not known.

Nowadays, the visitors are an international mix of travellers, fettered with cameras and camping gear, and the monks are in deeper despair than ever. The Jebeliya guard at the chain across the road shook his head vigorously when we tried to drive past. Bailey spoke to him in Arabic and showed him our letters of introduction to Archbishop Damianos, the head of the monastery and of the Order of St. Catherine. It seemed to work. We were let through—a small but significant victory.

Just ahead, at the end of the track, was Gebel Maneijar, the place of the first meeting between God and Moses. A spot of green and a tiny white chapel marked what the monks believe is the place of the heavenly dialogue. Then, presenting itself like a scale model of a desert fort, complete with oasis garden and cypress trees, was the monastery, set on a slight rise from the wadi floor to the base of Mt. Sinai. Against the sheer, irregular granite side of the mountain, every stone and fissure perfectly in focus under the brilliant sunlight of a cloudless sky, it seemed at once tiny and gigantic—a compact, enclosed town hiding behind towering stone barriers. Up close, only the tips of the campanile, the mosque, and the dormitory dome could be seen over the walls. We parked and walked up some outside stairs to the west gate, in a courtyard just above the garden. Not a person was in sight, not so much as a stray tourist. At last, we heard a voice call to us in Arabic. It was a Jebeliya porter leaning from a small window high up in the wall overlooking the gate. Bailey told him our purpose in being there—that we wished to spend the night at the monastery, see its treasures, visit with the monks, and climb Mt. Sinai early in the morning. The Bedouin answered circumspectly that all the monks were at prayer and nobody would be available to discuss our requests until five o'clock. We said we'd wait.

WITH two hours to kill before we knew whether we would be welcome or not, I decided to climb the mountain across the wadi from the monastery for a better view of Mt. Sinai. Bailey stretched out in the shade of the courtyard wall to rest for whatever circumstance lay ahead. The breeze was strong and refreshing once I had climbed out of the wadi. Halfway up the mountain, on a ledge polished



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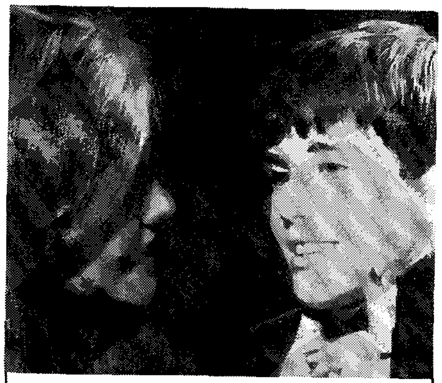

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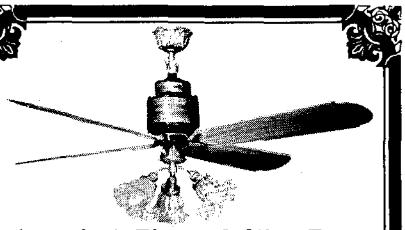

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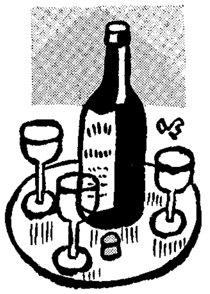
smooth by wind and time, were a hidden spring and pool, surrounded by stunted palms. I washed my face and drank from the icy, sweet water of the spring. Within the hundred and eighty degrees of view open to me from this vantage point was an enormous chunk of history and legend, a vast panorama of Western culture and thought—Gebel Maneijar to my left, Mt. Sinai and the monastery directly in front of me, and the broad Plain of Raha down the wadi to my right. How absurd and beautiful the monastery looked from up there! Always ridiculous from a military standpoint, it no longer pretended to be a fortress, its ramparts now filled in with stone and its cannon long gone. Teetering piles of boulders, just waiting, it seemed, to become avalanches at the slightest nudge, were poised on the mountainside directly over the walled compound. Its existence was so fragile and incongruous. Yet its very inappropriateness in this godly, wild setting was a testimonial to tenacity and faith.

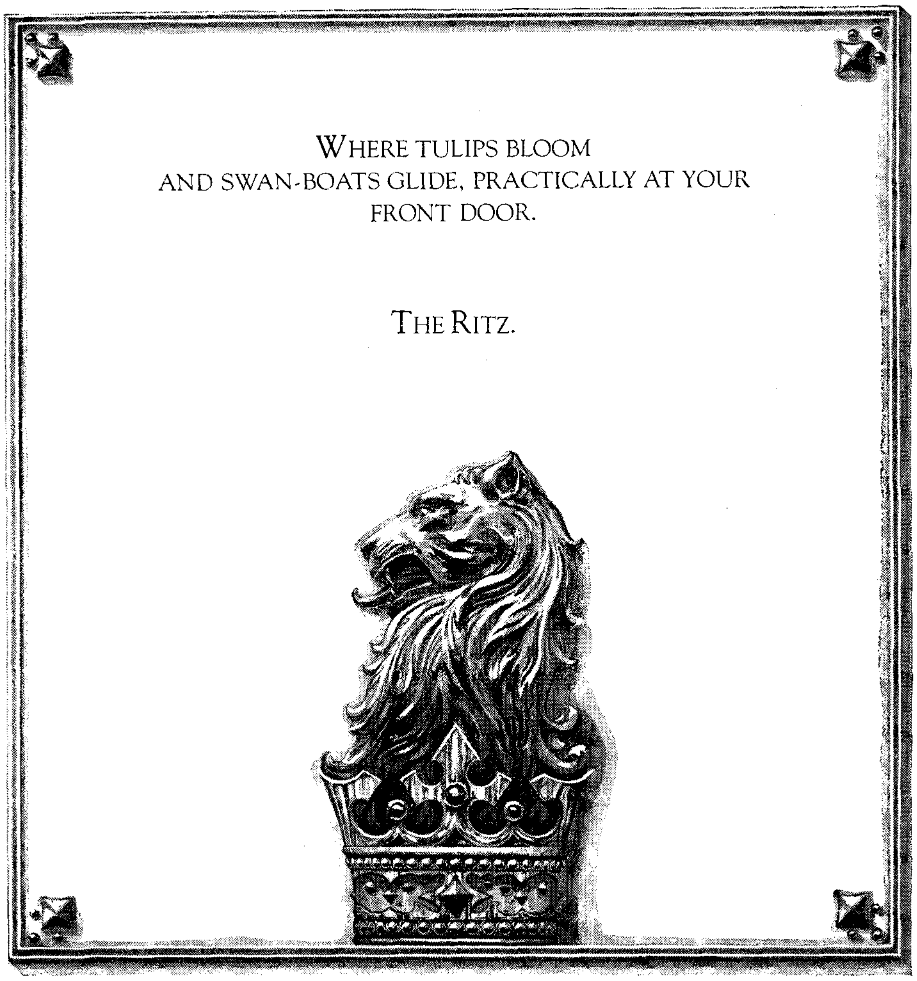
Mt. Sinai grew ominous in jagged silhouette against the setting sun. If this mountain wasn't the veritable site, it would nevertheless do. It had all the right elements: grandeur, beauty, mystery. "Horeb," "Gebel Musa," "Mt. Sinai," "the Mountain of God," or simply "the Mountain"—these were the names given to the peak by Jews, Christians, and Arabs. It was the Christians who were intent on setting an exact geographical designation for the mountain of the legend. Up to the fifth century, the designation was at nearby Gebel Serbal, but then pilgrims gradually changed their minds in favor of the present, loftier peak because of Bedouin tales of eerie rumblings on Gebel Musa and expeditions to test the stories. An intrepid, rather liberated nun named Etheria took it upon herself to climb Gebel Musa in order to see if the Biblical sites were feasible on that mountain, and her reports, more than anything else, brought about the geographical change. It was then fully accepted in Christian and Arab circles that Gebel Musa was indeed the true Sinai. (The latest confirmation has come from an unexpected source: President Anwar Sadat, who, during a heady moment in the erratic peace negotiations, announced plans for a Christian-Muslim-Jewish shrine to be built on the peak—once, of course, Israel had ceded the peninsula to Egypt. He also invited Pope John Paul II to pray there, and suggested that the treaty-signing ceremony take place on the summit. Begin vetoed the treaty-signing-ceremony idea, for religious and, perhaps, physical reasons. "To climb up at dawn to the summit in the belief that it is the place where Moses received the Ten Commandments is artificial and not serious," he said. Mt. Sinai will be returned to Egypt during the nine-month withdrawal phase.)



But what of the Jewish tradition of Mt. Sinai, which, after all, initiated the legend? The Jews have never set an exact site for the mountain, although most now accept Gebel Musa as the probable place. Its precise placement really doesn't matter so much. What seems more important is the mystique attached to the mountain, not the geography. In rabbinical lore, all Jewish souls, past, present, and future, were on Mt. Sinai when God made the covenant with His Chosen People. Isaac Bashevis Singer put it another way, in his novel "Shosha": a character says, "We are running away and Mount Sinai runs after us. This chase has made us sick and mad." Beyond the recitation in the Old Testament of events that occurred on the mountain—the announcement of the lawgiving to Moses, the theatrical presentation of the Ten Commandments, the divine instruction in the laws of the Torah, the pagan manufacture of the golden calf, the smashing of the tablets by a furious Moses, the reinstitution of the tablets by a "horned" Moses (actually, a misinterpretation of the Hebrew word for "shone," which is similar to the word for "horned;" the Bible says that Moses' face shone when he came down from the mountain carrying the new tablets)—beyond all that, there is a cabalistic mystique about Mt. Sinai, wherever it is. It holds that for His theophany God chose Mt. Sinai over all others—especially Mt. Tabor, Mt. Carmel, and Mt. Hermon—because no idols were ever upon it. (More hardheaded scholars have pointed out, however, that the trumpets, fire, smoke, and thunder observed by the Israelites on Mt. Sinai have roots in pagan Semitic festivals, when idols were as plentiful as donkeys.) Mt. Sinai and the Temple Mount in Jerusalem (Mt. Moriah) were the two sacred places through whose virtue the world exists. The mystics said that after the coming of the Messiah, God will bring Sinai, Tabor, and Carmel together and all three mountains will sing His praises. In keeping with this rabbinical pathetic fallacy, Mt. Hermon, weeping over its exclusion, was made by God the highest mountain in the Promised Land and was presented with an enviable cap of snow as compensation. Its tears became the Jordan River. In short, "Mt. Sinai" is to Jews not so much a place as an intangible symbol.

IT was almost five o'clock, the hour of decision. I made my way down the mountain and around the back wall of the monastery, the side closest to Mt. Sinai. The rarefied feeling of being in the presence of deathless history which I had experienced up on the mountain across the wadi, was dispelled by the trash heap I stumbled upon outside the back wall—a town dump of tin cans, liquor bottles, half-burned garbage, plastic containers, and such discarded odds and ends as a broken toilet seat and a split garden hose. It was as if a wild picnic had taken place in the shadow of holiness, saluting godhood with rubbish. Even here in the sanctity of the wilderness there was a waste-disposal problem. I walked on top of the wall above the monks' garden, a flourishing rectangle of greenery, with cypresses, palms, fruit trees, grapevines, vegetables, flowers, and penned animals, including a peacock. An aqueduct brought water to the garden, and telephone lines led in from the direction of the Israeli Field School. Both the newer and the older garden stones were etched with graffiti in Greek, Arabic, and Hebrew—some, according to the engraved dates, more than a hundred years old. Tourists never change.

There was more activity in the courtyard than when I had left Bailey there, two hours earlier. Bailey was talking in English with a cherubic blond, blue-eyed German girl in her twenties and an older woman who was unmistakably her mother. They were Christiane and Elisabeth Rahmer, from Frankfurt am Main, and they were touring the Holy Land on a shoestring. They had taken a bus to Nuweiba, hitchhiked to the Field School, and had hiked in to the monastery, assuming they would be welcomed by the monks. They had since been told by the porter, via Bailey's translation, that they would not be welcomed and that they should leave the premises. Their feet were bruised from walking down the wadi road in cheap plastic sandals. With no place to stay, with no more equipment than a water bottle and a small rucksack containing tins of food and a change of clothing, they were weary, scared, and confused. Christiane said she had spent a month at a foreigners' kibbutz in Is-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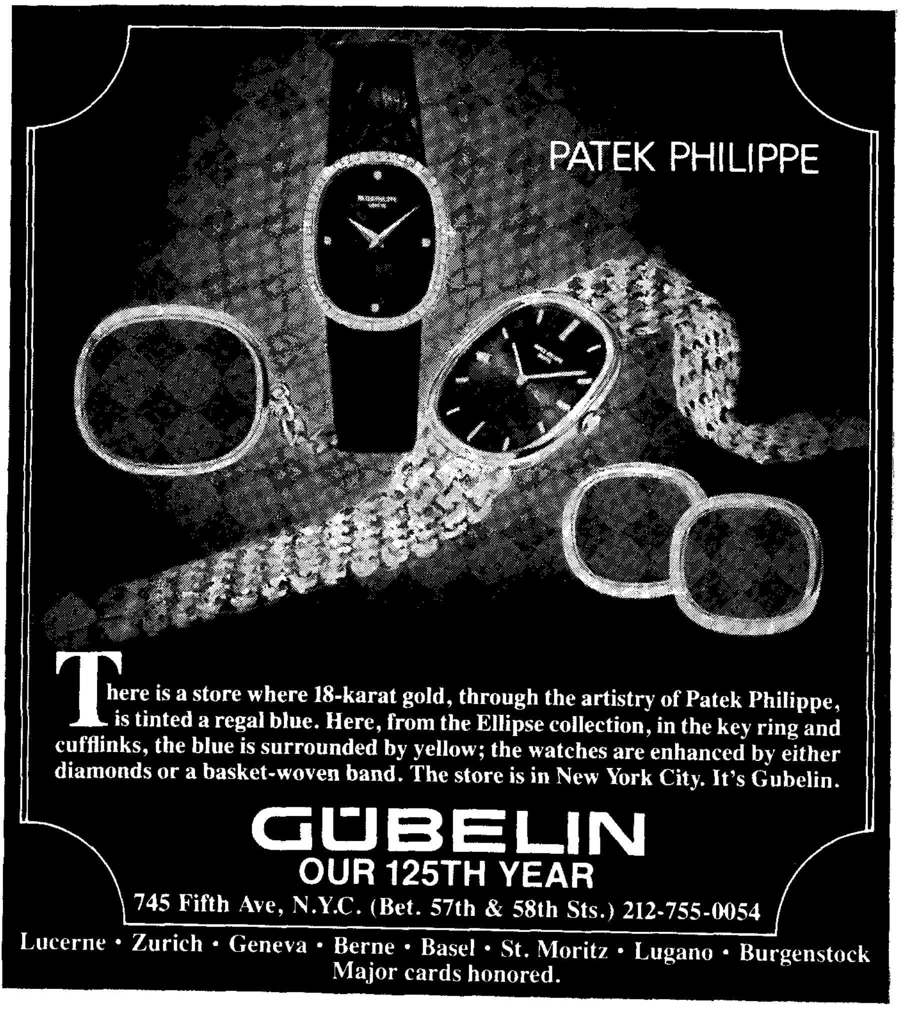
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rael five years before but had never run into anything like this. Bailey and I promised to see what we could do for them—if, indeed, we were allowed into the monastery ourselves.

Resting near the huge metal-clad wooden gate was a party of well-dressed South Americans, who, Bailey informed me, were the Venezuelan Ambassador to Israel and his wife, children, and servants. The Ambassador had used his influence to be assured of accommodations at the monastery and was cooling his heels, waiting for the gate to be opened. The delay, apparently, was due to the imminent arrival of a hiking troop of Israeli teen-agers, led by armed guides from the Field School, coming down the wadi road. Bailey spoke to the Jebeliya porter in the window again and learned that the monks would not open the gate until the Israelis withdrew. They arrived in the courtyard—laughing, singing, joshing, generally underdressed—and proceeded to listen inattentively to one of their guides lecture them on the history of St. Catherine's. As the lecturer droned on in Hebrew, we were all getting anxious—particularly the Venezuelans. At one point, Bailey spoke to an armed guide, explaining the delicate situation. The guide shrugged in the Israeli manner—as though to say, "If they don't like us, to hell with them"—but in a few minutes he marched his troop off toward the Field School.

As soon as the teen-agers were out of sight and earshot, we heard the sound of bars being removed from behind the gate, which then swung open to reveal a bearded young monk, clad in the dark gown and fezlike hat of the Greek Orthodox monastic orders. He motioned to the Venezuelans to enter, and said in Arabic to Bailey that he would like to see our letters of introduction. Affecting an air of indifference and making sucking sounds through his teeth, he slowly read the letters, both of them in Greek, to Archbishop Damianos. When he had finished reading, he said that the Archbishop was away in Cairo. He would have to consult with the senior monk about our entry to the monastery. As for the German women, it was extremely doubtful whether they could stay. He closed the gate and barred it. We told the Rahmers not to worry, that we would somehow find a place for them to spend the night—perhaps in the Land-Rover. The monk's pompous attitude had frightened and disturbed them, they said; they were pious Roman Catholics and were not used to such treatment from the clergy. They had scrimped and saved for this

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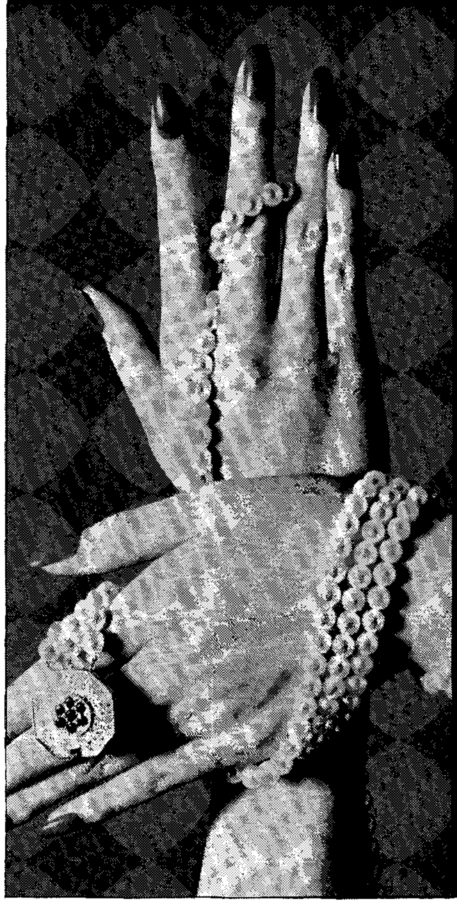

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trip, and up to now everyone had been kind to them. "We do not understand," Elisabeth said. At six o'clock, the gate opened again, and the young monk told Bailey and me that we could enter. What about the German women? He regarded them closely, as if they were camels for sale, while making that curious sucking sound. After a long moment, he nodded pontifically. They, too, could enter.

We quickly unloaded all we would need from the Land-Rover, since the gates would be locked for the night once we had gone into the monastery. Then, carrying our gear, we followed the young monk, single file, through the portal into a dark tunnel and up some stairs to a central courtyard. The interior of the monastery was lovely and complicated. Whitewashed buildings, each with a different function, strained against one another and the exterior walls for space. There was no architectural logic to the enclosed town; it was like the anarchic charm of a hillside Italian fishing village. Several Jebeliya Bedouins were about, speaking in Greek to a few monks. (I later learned that fewer than a dozen monks are at the monastery at any one time, not counting those who reside in seclusion at chapels in the mountains. An Israeli who has had many contacts with the monks since 1967 told me that duty at St. Catherine's is considered a kind of punishment for members of the order, and so the intellectual and moral qualities of the monks there are not exemplary. However, all the members of the order, whether they serve in Greece, Syria, Egypt, Rumania, or the Sinai, want to be interred in the monastery ossuary when they die.)

The young monk led us to a terrace outside the Archbishop's sitting room, near the living quarters. Within the sitting room we could see the Venezuelans having coffee and chatting with the senior monk. When they had finished their coffee, they were directed to motel-like rooms nearby, the Jebeliya carrying their luggage for them. At last, the senior monk approached us as we huddled together like refugees on the terrace. His bony, ascetic face betrayed testiness at our presence. We were obviously a nuisance. "What are your requests?" he asked us, through the Arabic-speaking young monk. Bailey told him that we, including the German women, would like to stay the night in whatever accommodations were available, buy bread and any other obtainable food for dinner, climb Mt. Sinai with a guide early in the morning, and then

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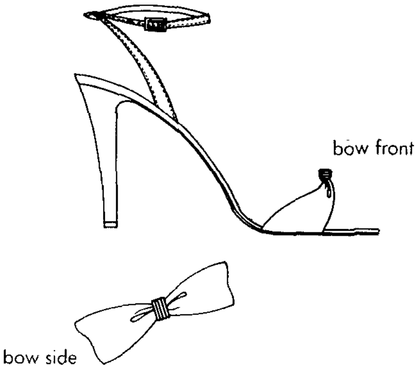

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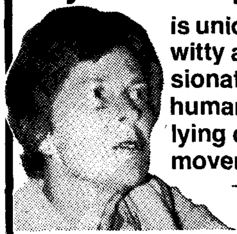

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visit the church, the Burning Bush Chapel, the library, and the ossuary before leaving. Of course, we would pay for these services. An animated discussion in Greek between the two monks followed. It was difficult to tell which one was for us and which one was against us. Finally, the senior monk addressed us. He told us that we could spend the night in the dormitory, have dinner in the dining room with our own food (only bread, water, tea, and sugar would be supplied by the monks), climb the mountain with a Jebeliya guide at 3:30 A.M., and perhaps, after morning Mass, see the church, the library, and the ossuary. We thanked him, and he answered rather coldly, in English, "Welcome."

An aged Bedouin led us across the compound to the dormitory, the biggest building within the walls, and we followed him up three long flights of stairs. Bailey and I were assigned to Room 23, a dingy, buggy cell on the top floor, but relieved we were to be there. The German women were given the room next door. We four were the only guests in the enormous dormitory, capable of holding several hundred people, as it had centuries ago. A large window overlooked the trash dump outside the back wall at the foot of the mountain. Faded blue paint covered the room's plaster walls, and a mirror, two cots, a writing desk, one chair, and a single bare light bulb hanging from the ceiling completed the furnishings. Seeing swarms of tiny bugs, I immediately thought of the Miracle of the Fleas. At one point in the monastery's early history, it was plagued by a virulent infestation of fleas, which drove the monks to escape en masse to the top of Mt. Sinai. The Virgin Mary appeared before them and said that the monastery was now flealess. When they descended, they found that this was indeed true, and they later built a chapel on the mountain commemorating the wonderful event. Just to be on the safe side, though, I unrolled my sleeping bag over the cot.

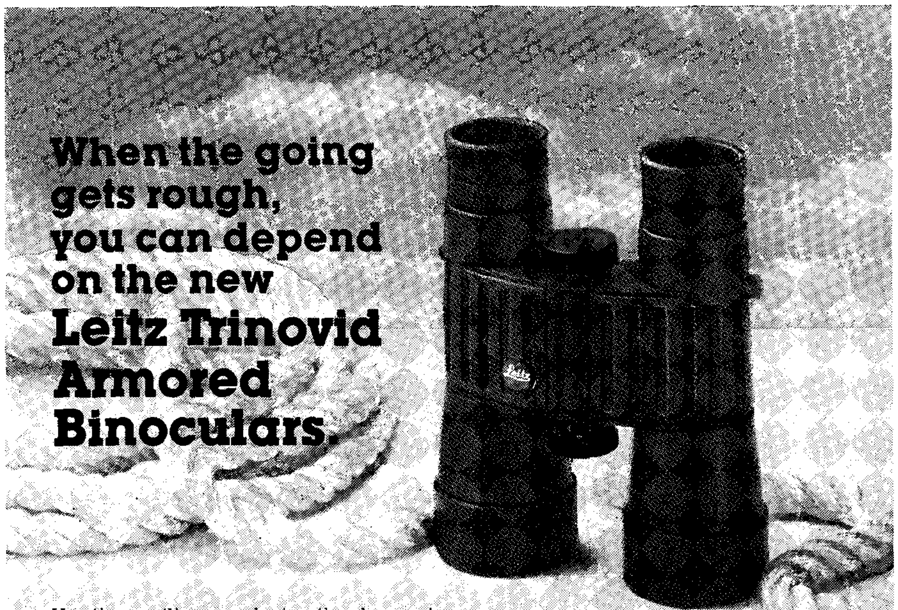
The dormitory dining room—seedy, cavernous, and decorated with tacky religious murals—became the scene of a delightful impromptu dinner. The four of us, of course, felt somewhat slighted at not being asked to break bread in the refectory with the monks and the Venezuelans, but the two Jebeliya in the adjoining kitchen were gracious and supplied us with cool water, plastic spoons, salt, tea, sugar, and home-baked bread—a hybrid loaf of hard pita and chewy Greek bread. To that, Bailey and I added our own provisions of canned corn, peas, and fish, four oranges, and Scotch. The German women contributed all they had in the way of food—some nondescript processed cheese and something they called pâté végétal, a bland soybean concoction, palatable when spread on bread with plenty of salt. We were all hungry, and thankful for what we had (the Germans were absolutely ecstatic, in fact), and the sharing of food and conversation put us in intimate good spirits, the kind people participating together in a spontaneous adventure know best.

The monks of St. Catherine's have had their critics before. Procopius spoke of their life as "a careful study of death," and the Reverend D. A. Randall, a Columbus, Ohio, clergyman who trekked through the Holy Land in the mid-eighteen-hundreds, wrote that he was "not very favorably impressed either with their intelligence or usefulness." Professor Palmer was most critical, stating that the monks demonstrated "no care for anything but indolence and rum." When Palmer visited the monastery, also in the middle of the nineteenth century, he was shocked to discover that they wouldn't hold church services unless the pilgrims demanded them. He was, however, touched by their giving loaves of bread daily to the local Bedouins, through a covered window in the north wall. (The monks no longer lower the loaves to the Bedouins through the window, but they continue to give bread to any Arab who comes to the main gate and asks for it.) But, perhaps, some visitors to the monastery have been uncharitable toward the monks, I thought as I strolled alone about the parapets and walkways after dinner. Their life here certainly was not easy. All they probably wanted from this world was to be left in religious insularity, free from mundane cares. Yet throughout the centuries they have had to put up with waves of Bedouin raiders, fanatic Muslims, Frankish knights, penitent pilgrims, alien warriors, and now brash Israeli youngsters and history-hungry tourists.

I wandered down the long stoa in front of the dormitory, observing such compromises with modern life as a well-equipped dispensary, including a dentist's chair and drill, a room housing an electric generator (which we were informed would be shut down at nine o'clock), storerooms containing canned goods, fresh vegetables, blankets, mechanical tools, and fire extinguishers (a precaution taken since a 1971 blaze, which was put out, with the help of the Israeli Army, before any serious damage occurred). I passed the open door of a monk's cell and saw its occupant reading a Greek newspaper under a bare bulb, an old sewing machine at his side. The last light of day was failing fast. I climbed the parapet over the main, or north, gate, from which I could look down on the church and the mosque, both in the center of the compound. The church appeared simple from the outside—standard rectangular Byzantine design with wooden roof and sandstone Russian campanile—but I knew what riches adorned the interior. The mosque, with an unusual square minaret, was used by the Jebeliya during Ramadan and important Muslim feast days. It was situated next to the church, its small dome respectfully lower than the top of the campanile. Nearby were the breaks in the wall for a boatswain's chair, which was once used to hoist pilgrims into the monastery without the danger of opening the gates to possible raiders, and the bread-dispensing window. Radical insularity was a thing of the past, whether the monks liked it or not.

In the darkness around me, three Jebeliya were kneeling on their prayer rugs, facing both the church and Mecca, which was about six hundred miles to the southeast. And looming over everything, against a blinding starlit sky, was the dark presence of Mt. Sinai, the great reason for it all. I was ruminating on the paradoxes of the scene when I heard a sharp voice behind me say in clear English, "Go to your room! Please go to your room now!" It was a monk I hadn't seen before—one who, apparently, was on some sort of guard duty that night, an ecclesiastic curfew warden. Like a child caught filching an extra piece of cake at summer camp, I obeyed. By the time I had mounted the stairs to my room, it was almost nine o'clock—lights-out. I half expected a flashlight-wielding counsellor in shorts, T-shirt, and crew hat to come by, checking to see if I was in my bed before taps. But it had been a long day, and in just six hours we would be up and climbing. Bailey was already asleep. Without a thought about fleas, I slipped into my sleeping bag.

THE next thing I saw was a flashlight shining in my face. It was held not by a camp counsellor but by our Jebeliya guide, who said something quietly in Arabic and then left to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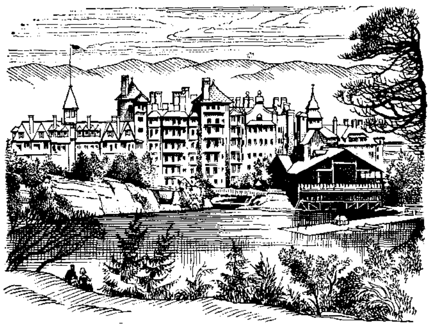

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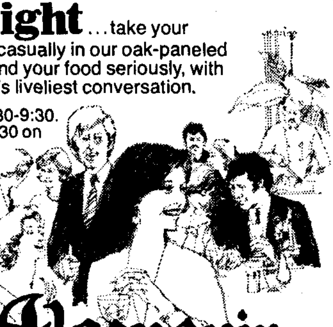

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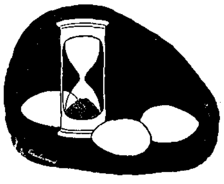
knock on the door of the German women. We were all out of bed, washed, and assembled in the dormitory dining room at 3:30 A.M., where we breakfasted on hot tea and bread—a fitting meal before a difficult climb. Stumbling through the monastery corridors and tunnels, we followed the flashlight beam of the guide—who introduced himself, in English, as Mahmoud—to the original wooden north-gate door, which he opened with an outsize brass key. Over the tall portal were inscriptions in Greek and Arabic, which, in English translation, read: "This holy monastery was erected on Mt. Sinai at the place where the Lord spoke to Moses, by the humble emperor of the Romans, Justinian, in his own eternal memory and in the memory of his wife, Theodora." Once beyond the gate, we turned east on the wadi road, starting the long, circuitous climb up the Pilgrims' Way to the peak of Mt. Sinai. With luck, we would be on the peak at sunrise—a memorable sight, according to everybody who had ever made the climb.



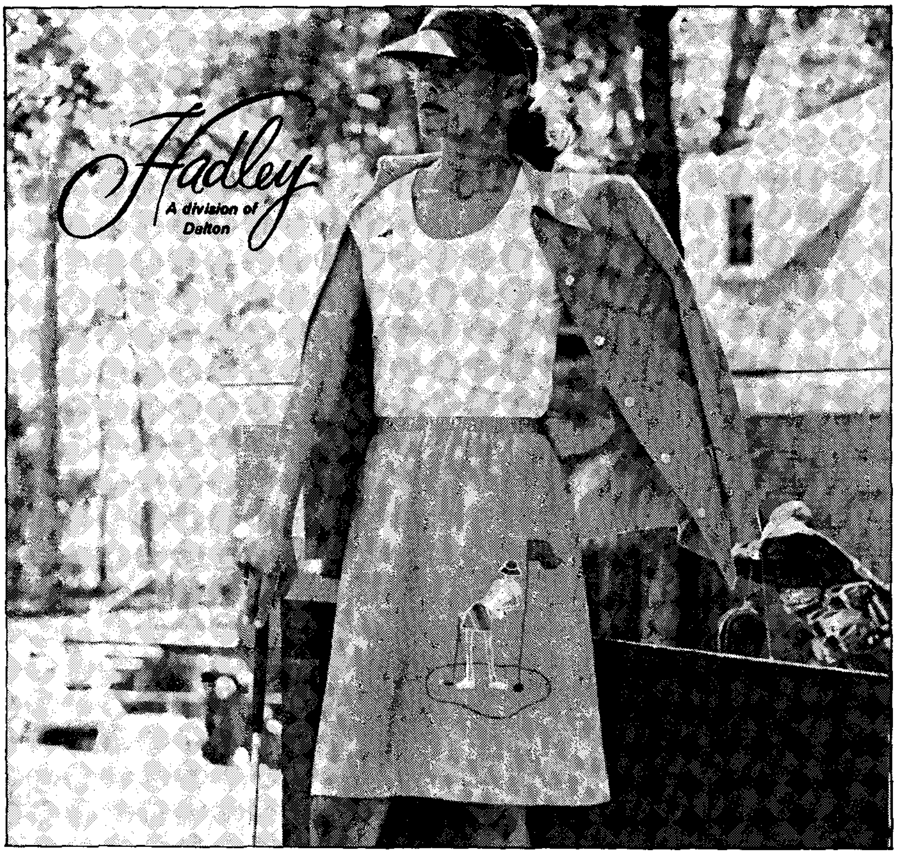
There was a brisk, dry, chilly wind. Although the Pilgrims' Way was not steep at the beginning, it was a harrowing walk in the dark over the nearly invisible stones along the path. Mahmoud's flashlight offered little help, since he was in the lead—followed by Bailey and me, with the German women bringing up the rear. The only sound besides the wind and our curses and grunts as we stumbled over stones was the celestial peal of the monastery bells sounding matins. But soon it was first light, and the going was easier. Also, the path widened, wide enough for a small cart, and the surface was smoother. About a third of the way up, we realized that Elisabeth Rahmer had dropped far behind, and we took a break to give her time to catch up. The stars were still clear as beacons, which inspired Bailey to recite a Bedouin poem about the Big Dipper circling the North Star. Mahmoud, like every Bedouin I had met, was entranced by the native verse, savoring each syllable and repeating the rhyming word with reverence. In the growing light, I saw that he looked like a tall version of Jordan's King Hussein, complete with trimmed mustache and piercing dark eyes. We asked him about his life, and he told us that he was born in a tent in a nearby wadi and had been working for the monastery since he was a little boy. He was literate in Arabic, and he had learned to speak Greek and a few words of English, all of which could help him gain more profitable employment on the outside if it weren't that he felt obligated by tradition to work for less money at the monastery. (He earned five hundred Israeli pounds a month—about thirty-five dollars—plus room and board from the monks, as opposed to a potential three thousand pounds a month in, say, Elath.) His sense of loyalty and responsibility was impressive.

In the first glimmer of dawn, the Gulf of Akaba and the mountains of Saudi Arabia revealed themselves through the morning mist as we started up again, on a steeper, winding grade. I found it easier to climb if I consciously imitated Mahmoud's Bedouin gait—a gliding, regular rhythm of relaxed legs and swinging arms. But there was no way of exactly imitating him; he was born and raised in these mountains, he had probably walked to the top of Mt. Sinai five hundred times, and he climbed like a goat. Keeping a steady pace, we reached a cleft between the lesser and greater peaks, where we rested again, staring in breathless silence at the lightening view. The greater peak, a conic pinnacle from our perspective, seemed to be glowing, as if in an Italian Renaissance religious painting or a bad Bette Davis movie. The eerie sight drove us to reach the top before the full sun came up. The cleft broadened into a flat valley with a lovely garden and a spring, surrounded by palms and cypresses. In the center of the garden was a small stone house, a shrine to the Prophet Elijah, who, the Bible says, had his own dramatic encounter with God on the mountain, after fleeing the wrath of evil King Ahab and Jezebel. The Lord told him to return to Israel and elect Elisha as his successor. Elijah is a holy figure to the Muslims as well as to the Jews and the Christians, and the shrine and garden are well cared for by the Jebeliya. The monks celebrate Mass at the shrine at least once every year.

From the Elijah shrine to the pinnacle, the path became a stone staircase of three hundred lovingly chiselled steps, carved out of the rock centuries ago by the monks. As I negotiated the steep, long steps curving up to the peak, I felt sharp pains in my shins. It was as if one must suffer this final pain in order to reach the top—a last trial for the penitent pilgrim. I wondered how those penitents in fetters—and sometimes on bloody knees—had climbed these bone-jarring steps. The setting and the shining goal certainly must have spurred them on.

For further inspiration along the way, there were two more spectacles: the footprint of either Muhammad's or Nebi Saleh's she-camel, depending on which legend you believe, and the palace of Abbas Pasha, a ruin clearly visible on a mountainside to the southwest. The camel footprint in the rock indeed looked like a camel's footprint, but as if molded of plaster of Paris. A tiny booth covered it, with tufts of vegetation strewn about as offerings, signifying the continuity of life. Some cynics have said that the footprint was manufactured by an ancient monk to protect the monastery from superstitious Muslims. As for the palace of Abbas Pasha, the story is far more mundane. He was the profligate grandson of Mohammed Ali, and a pasha of Egypt in 1849, who, because of his excesses, decided to retreat into the wilderness to recover his sanctity. He placed joints of meat on various Sinai mountains, on the theory that the one that lasted longest would mark the holiest spot on which to erect a palace. The meat was preserved best on Gebel Tiniye, but after a tortuous road was constructed and a grand palace half finished—the most back-breaking enterprise for Egyptian slaves since the building of the pyramids—Abbas Pasha changed his mind and elected to live on Mt. Sinai itself, so he could be closer to Nebi Musa. Bedouin legend has it that he fought with Moses on the mountain and then cursed the entire region. In any case, Abbas Pasha gave up the idea of a desert retreat and returned to Cairo, where he was killed by a slave he had discovered dallying in his harem. What's left of the road and the palace stands as a bleak memorial to yet another tyrant's madness.

WITH aching shins, and perspiration evaporating in the chill wind, sucking the thin air for whatever oxygen it offered, I arrived at the glowing peak—the traditional highest meeting place of man and God—just as the sun rose strong and warm. The five of us stood together in the rehabilitating sunlight on the smooth granite top, each basking in his own personal pride and exaltation at having made it. For a while, nobody spoke. The wind was too loud for conversation, even if we had wanted to talk. Here we five were by wild chance—two Germans (one of whom had lived through the Nazi regime), an Israeli, a Bedouin, and an American—catching our breath and warming our bodies in this most unlikely, and yet oddly appropriate, place



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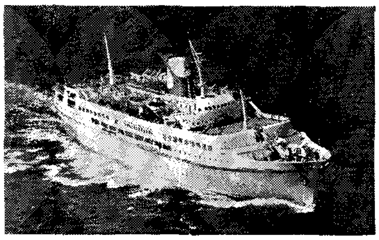

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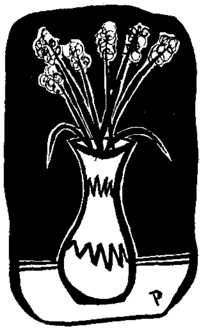
on earth: the frontier of Heaven, the top of the world. I have never been imbued with any religious spirit, and I did not feel any then. Rather, I felt a sense of nature and heritage, which perhaps is the same thing. If there was ever a mountain for God to address man, this was it. Whether one believed the religious myths or not didn't really seem to matter. There was something magical about being at the summit of Mt. Sinai.

While I marvelled at the crystalline beauty, Elisabeth and Christiane crossed themselves and sat down to rest on a ledge. Bailey recited a prayer in Hebrew to himself, the wind drowning out his voice, and Mahmoud walked over to a compact white mosque just beside but slightly lower than a small white Greek Orthodox chapel. (There wasn't so much as a Star of David on top of Mt. Sinai. It occurred to me that Bailey and I were the only tangible Jewish presence there.) I followed Mahmoud, and noticed that he scraped a marking near the mosque door with a stone, to show that he had been there that day and all was well. A chalked inscription in English on the door read, "God is still talking today. Listen!" There were other graffiti, both inside and outside the mosque—names and dates in a variety of languages (somebody named Schweitzer had made a particularly prominent mark)—and crosses and initials were carved into the rock all about the peak. Once a year, the Jebeliya sacrifice a sheep to Moses in the mosque. The stone chapel, with corrugated-iron roofing that rattled in the breeze, was locked, but I managed to boost myself up to a barred window and peer inside. Through the bars and broken glass I saw an old bureau, some cans, and frescoes of Christ on the Cross, an angel receiving Christ, and Moses leading his people away from Pharaoh. A rock in the chapel is believed by the monks to be the exact spot where the tablets of the Ten Commandments were given to Moses. A shallow, narrow cave next to the chapel is supposedly where Moses covered his face from the glory of God and slept during his stay on the mountain; a depression in the cave rock is said to have been made by Moses' head. Between the chapel proper and the cave is a small room, where the monks eat and rest when they come up to the peak once a year to offer Mass. Neither the monks nor the Bedouins ever sleep overnight on the mountain; Mahmoud had told us that they want to keep the peak clean and holy, but, he admitted, they are also leery of the unearthly noises reportedly heard at night on Mt. Sinai.

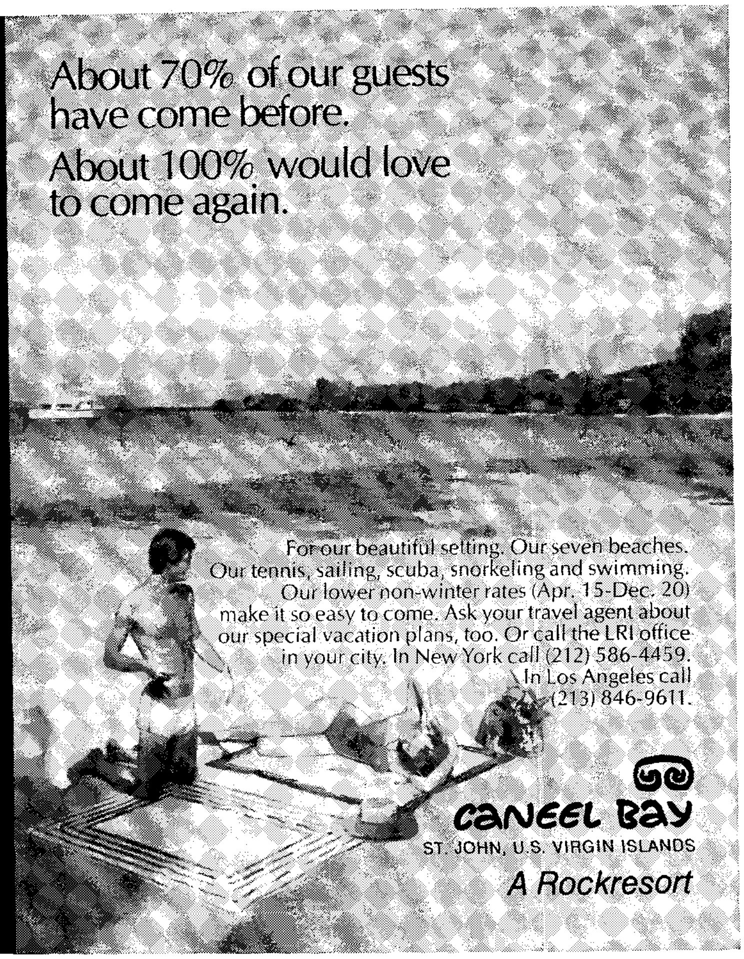
Steps led from the pinnacle to various isolated roosts on ledges, where hermits and pilgrims through the ages have sat in contemplation. I descended to one of these roosts, barely large enough for a single person to sit cross-legged, on the edge of an escarpment. The morning was now full-blown, the sun having burned off whatever haze there was and heating the stone under me. The wind was still strong but pleasant, not chilly. I had the dizzying sensation that I could make out every pebble on mountains miles away. Before me was the peak of Gebel Katharina, where St. Catherine's bones were discovered, one of the few mountains in the peninsula higher than Mt. Sinai. Clearly visible were the Chapel of St. Catherine and an Israeli Army post on the peak, with a radar antenna, the latter a sudden reminder of a less ethereal world. During the bitter cold of one winter in these mountains, two Israeli soldiers had died of exposure when their Jeep broke down on the road leading to the top of Gebel Katharina. Snowstorms are not uncommon. The remains of Abbas Pasha's palace were in sharp focus, and again I wondered at the extraordinary folly of its construction on such a high, craggy mountain. To the north was the El Tih Plateau, harsh and forbidding in the bright light, and farther away I thought I could make out Wadi Saal and Ein El Furtaga. Three black birds with white markings—a species of crow called *shahariya*—alighted on a rock near me. Like everything that morning on Mt. Sinai, they seemed to have some mystical significance, though what they signified did not come to me in an intuitive flash. Perhaps the sign meant that it was time to go. It was past seven o'clock, and I wanted to see as much of the monastery's treasures as I could before the monks sequestered themselves for their Sabbath.



After one last, lingering three-hundred-and-sixty-degree look around, we started down from the peak. Our plan was to take the direct stone-step route back to the monastery, thirty-seven hundred stairs hewn from the rock of a narrow, precipitous path leading from Elijah's shrine straight to the back wall of St. Catherine's. We stopped at the shrine to sample some of the sweet well water and wash our faces at a small pool. Again, Mahmoud scratched some marks on a building in the garden—this time, the initials of his full name, Mahmoud Muhammad Abdullah Abudullah. He stood back and beamed at his handiwork, proud of his literacy. Just below the shrine were the ruins of the Chapel of the Fleas and the cave in which a saintly monk named Stephanos lived out his life in splendid isolation. At several archways built over the steps, Stephanos would examine for piety pilgrims making their way to the mountaintop and would hear their confessions. Eroded rocks along the way startled us with their natural sculpture, some like prehistoric monsters, others like mammoth Brancusis. The stone steps, widely spaced and dangerously smooth, took all our concentration. The charley horses they caused were torture. Apparently, one must suffer while both ascending and descending Mt. Sinai; only at the top is there peace. But the view of the wild terrain, the sculptured rocks and caves, the thick archways, and, finally, straight below us, the toylike monastery were worth the pain and effort of this return route. We arrived back at the main gate at eight-forty-five, exhausted and aching but elated and anxious to see more.

A WONDROUS change of attitude had taken place while we were gone. The monks provided some hot tea and bread for us as soon as we entered the monastery, and they pleasantly informed us that we could tour the premises with the Venezuelans at nine o'clock, beginning with the library. Why the change, we wondered. Had the Venezuelans interceded for us? Had the monks reread and reconsidered the letters of introduction? Was it because it was Sunday? Or was it because they would soon be rid of us? Whatever the reason, we were grateful.

At the gate to the library, sealed with a huge chain and padlock, were Father Paul, our guide on the tour, and all the Venezuelans, dressed as if they were attending Mass in the finest cathedral in Caracas. Father Paul unlocked the gate and led us into a large, well-lit gallery crowded with icons, triptychs, panels, gilded doors, frescoes, and illuminated manuscripts, any one of which would have been a major acquisition by the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Another, even larger room, sealed from us by a floor-to-ceiling wire fence, contained approximately eight thousand ancient manuscripts and books belonging to the



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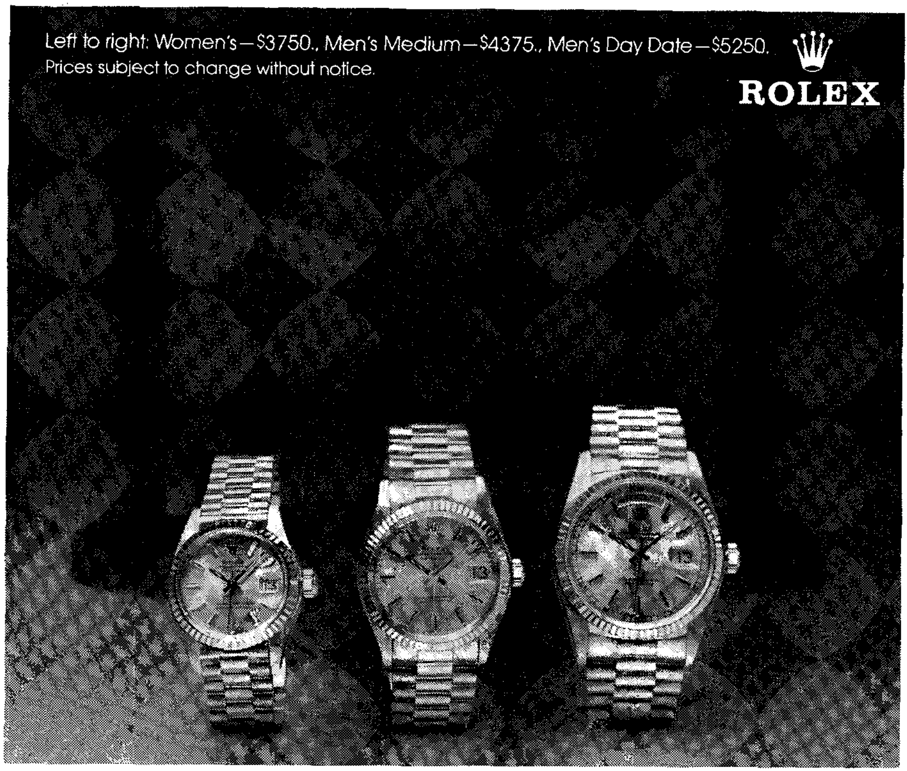

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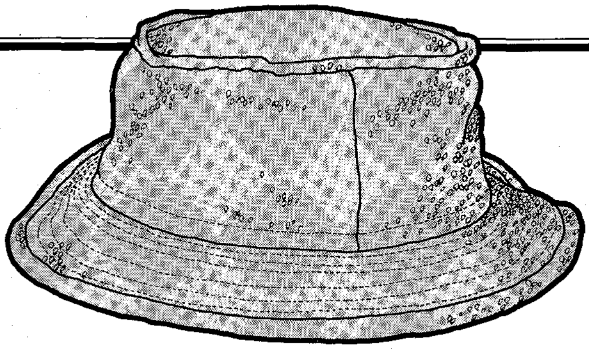

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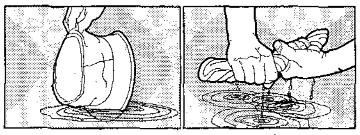

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monastery—a collection second only to the Vatican Library for precious texts in Greek, Syriac, Arabic, Slavonic, Latin, Persian, Coptic, Georgian, Ethiopian, and Armenian. (They had recently been catalogued and arranged by specialists from Great Britain and the United States and the room had the look of university library stacks, even boasting a sprinkler system.) The brilliance of the art, so casually displayed in that wilderness treasure trove, was staggering. A hundred and fifty icons (of the more than two thousand the monastery owns) were exhibited in the gallery, many of them dating from the sixth century and painted in the encaustic, or heated-colored-wax-on-wood, technique. The earliest ones—including the magnificent "Christ Pantocrator"—had survived the Byzantine iconoclastic movement because St. Catherine's Monastery was so remote from the iconoclast emperors; their value today is inestimable. Of the other works, the most arresting was a fresco of Moses, behind gilded portals in a small chapel dedicated to him, off to the side of the gallery.

Just a few of the monastery's precious manuscripts were on display in the glass cases—the fifth-century Codex Syriacus (a Syriac text of the Gospels) being the most important of these. The monks have been extremely sensitive about showing off their wealth of manuscripts ever since the notorious Codex Sinaiticus affair of 1859. That famous document—a fourth-century Greek translation from the Hebrew of the Old and New Testaments commissioned by Constantine the Great and sent by Justinian to his favorite charity, the monastery—helped confirm and revise all other Biblical texts. In 1859, a German theologian and scholar, Konstantin von Tischendorf, visited the monastery and was permitted to examine the rare manuscript leaves. He asked if he could show the remarkable pages to his patron, Czar Alexander II, and the trusting monks agreed. Another version has it that von Tischendorf saw the monks using the leaves to start a fire and, aghast, saved the pages from destruction. Whatever the case, he took the manuscript away from the Sinai, leaving behind a duly signed receipt. A framed English translation of the document hung on the wall of the monastery library, under the heading "How the Monastery Lost Its Codex Sinaiticus."

The monks of St. Catherine's never saw the Codex Sinaiticus again. Russia kept it as a national treasure in the Imperial Library at St. Petersburg. But in 1933 the Soviet government, desperate for foreign currency, sold it to the British for a hundred thousand pounds, half of which was raised by donations from ordinary Britons. Ever since, the leaves have been in the British Museum. The monks were still understandably bitter about what Father Paul called "the theft," as the framed von Tischendorf receipt indicated. An attempt was recently made to retrieve the Codex Sinaiticus from the British, but, according to Father Paul, "the British want too much pounds sterling." Why, I asked him, didn't the monks sell an icon or two and use the money to buy back the Codex? Father Paul shrugged. "It is our Codex anyway," he said.

Our next stop on the guided tour was the church. A few other monks joined us and Father Paul. With great ceremony, they produced outsize keys and opened the tall, intricately carved sixth-century doors, made of Lebanon cedar and remarkably well preserved by the dry climate. An inscription over the doors, from Psalm 118, read: "This gate of the Lord, into which the righteous shall enter." None of us, righteous or not, was prepared for the splendor. Beyond the narthex panels, erected by Crusader knights and carved with their crests, was the enormous, vaulted nave, with a hanging forest of silver and gold chandeliers, a handsome mosaic floor, a gilded ceiling with portraits of Christ, side chapels, dozens of icons of all ages and subjects (including Moses), monks' wooden seats along the main aisle, and seven-foot brass candlesticks cast in Nineveh. Two rows of six gigantic monolithic granite columns, painted white, extended down the length of the nave, each representing a month of the year and affixed with appropriate icons of saints venerated during its particular month. As we walked, hushed and overwhelmed, down the center of the nave, the monks kept a wary eye on us, looking, I imagined, for a potential von Tischendorf. At the iconostasis, the richly adorned wooden partition before the altar, the monks formed a protective wall between us and the icons.

Behind the iconostasis was a semi-domed apse, the underside of the dome covered with a sixth-century mosaic of the Transfiguration of Jesus, whose glowing presence was flanked by Moses and Elijah, with Peter, James, and John beneath them, as the Transfiguration is described in the Gospel According to St. Matthew. Surrounding the mosaic were medallions of Old Testament prophets and New Testament apostles. On a vertical wall above

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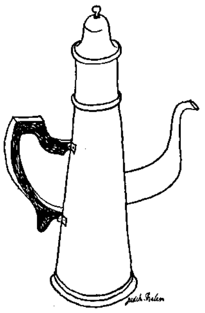
the semi-dome were depictions of, purportedly, Justinian and his wife, Theodora, and more panels showing angels offering gifts and Moses receiving the Law and confronting the Burning Bush. The effect of this concentrated, ecumenical mosaic was stunning. And under it all was the catafalque holding the remains of St. Catherine and the altar, laden with silver candlesticks and crucifixes. Only our stiff necks and the prompting of the monks made us move on to the Chapel of the Burning Bush, the original church built by Empress Helena, just behind the apse.



"Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground," the Lord said to Moses from the flames of the Burning Bush, according to the Book of Exodus. Heeding this injunction, the monks demanded that we remove our shoes in the anteroom of the small chapel, explaining that it was the holiest spot in the monastery. A large red CO_2 fire extinguisher stood in the anteroom, lending a neat touch of irony to the scene. (Was there fear of the Burning Bush's igniting again?) The actual site of the Bush contained no bush at all—but, rather, a silver plaque laid in stone. Four small marble pillars supported a diminutive altar over the plaque, and around the chapel were wall tiles, more icons, mosaics, a censer, candlesticks, and Persian rugs. A lit candle over the Bush site perhaps gave some justification for the fire extinguisher. It is said that a window over the altar catches the sunlight only one day a year—on March 23rd—allowing the chapel to be naturally, and mysteriously, illuminated. The monks seemed to be disappointed that none of us was especially affected by the chapel and its lore, even when they showed us the living descendants of the Burning Bush just outside the back wall of the church (the roots begin under the altar). Indeed, there were three green bramble-like bushes growing there, which the Venezuelans called *zarzamora*, a common plant in Venezuela. The monks claimed that these bushes were the only examples of the species in the Sinai and that transplantings outside the monastery have always failed. However, botanists have identified them as shrubs of the genus *Colutea*, plentiful in the hills of the Negev and in the northeastern Sinai.

Near the bushes was a well, covered with wooden planks, which Father Paul said was the Well of Midian, where Moses encountered the seven daughters of Jethro after his first flight from Egypt. Father Paul's narration of the tale inspired Bailey to tell the Bedouin version: Moses ran from Egypt into the wilderness of Sinai and came upon the Well of Midian. He sat under a tree and slept, but was awakened by some girls who wanted to water their flocks. They couldn't lift the stone cover of the well, however, until Moses helped them. The girls watered their animals and went to their father, Jethro, and told him about the kind Egyptian, whereupon Jethro sent one of them back to find the good man and invite him to his tent. She discovered Moses still at the well and told him that Jethro wanted to see him. Moses agreed to come and followed the girl. Along the way, the wind lifted her gown over her legs, and Moses saw her bare flesh—an abomination among Bedouins. But Moses preserved her honor by instructing the girl to walk behind him, so that he could not view the wind's caprice—which is why all Bedouin women walk behind men to this day. (An apocryphal story that made the rounds after the Arab-Israeli wars held that the Bedouins reversed the traditional male-female walking positions because of land mines; in point of fact, no Bedouin woman has ever been seen walking in front of a man.) We were all amused by Bailey's story—all except Father Paul, who quickly insisted that we had just enough time left to visit the ossuary.

Beside the white charnel house in the garden, alive with singing birds and buzzing insects, was a tiny conventional cemetery. Because of the difficulty of digging graves in the rocky ground and the number of monks from the St. Catherine's Order who must be buried at the monastery, bodies are disinterred from the cemetery after five years or so and the remains deposited in the ossuary. We were led into a spacious, airless room, fitted out with two coal-bin-size cages. In one cage were hundreds of sandstone-colored skulls, piled one upon another to form a ghastly hillock; the second, larger cage held a hideous assortment of bones—ulnae, tibiae, phalanges, vertebral columns—in a massive anatomical jumble. It was as if a tornado had hit a medical school. In niches along the walls were the more orderly bones and skulls of various archbishops, tidily packed away in their individual recesses for the ages. But the most chilling sight was a full skeleton, dressed in formal dark-purple embroidered monk's robes and cowl, propped in a sitting position, its head shyly, questioningly atilt. The finger bones, with bits of dried flesh and nails still adhering, clutched a staff and a rosary, and the feet, pigeon-toed, protruded from the bottom of the robe. It was the well-preserved remains of Stephanos, the saintly monk who had lived alone near Elijah's shrine and had examined pilgrims for piety. Because of his virtue and sanctity, he had been given the singular honor of "guarding," in appropriate costume, the dead ever since his own death, in 580. After staring at Stephanos for a while, I became less appalled by him. His inquiring posture, so typical of what he must have been like in life as he heard the weary pilgrims' confessions, seemed to be asking what business I had here. At last, I had no convincing answer, and I joined the others, who were more or less fleeing into the bright sunlight outside.

Strangely, the visit to the ossuary had not diminished our appetites. In fact, we were ravenous. When Bailey, the Germans, and I returned to the dormitory dining room, we found that the monks had sent over cans of sardines and baked beans and some bread. While devouring these welcome rations, we concluded that the monks had been seized with guilt over their behavior of the previous day and were trying to make amends. Later, when they refused any payment for our stay, we were sure of it. Just past noon, we packed our gear, said our goodbyes (the Venezuelans actually seemed sorry to see us go), tipped Mahmoud, and, with the German women, piled into the Land-Rover. Bailey and I still felt responsible for the Germans' welfare, but since we were scheduled to head northwest to Firan and the turquoise mines at Serabit El Khadim, the best we could do was drop them near the Civil Administration Center, where they might catch a ride to Nuweiba or Elath. Once again, like two innocent waifs in the wilderness, they were left to their own meagre devices. It was a sad farewell. The four of us had gone through a lot together. Watching them forlornly waving in the dust, we drove up the road by the tomb of Nebi Saleh to the Watiya Pass, then west along Wadi El Sheikh (named for Nebi Saleh) toward Firan. We had already lived through a hard ten-hour day, and we had, at the very least, another gruelling ten hours ahead.

—BURTON BERNSTEIN

(This is the second part of a three-part article.)

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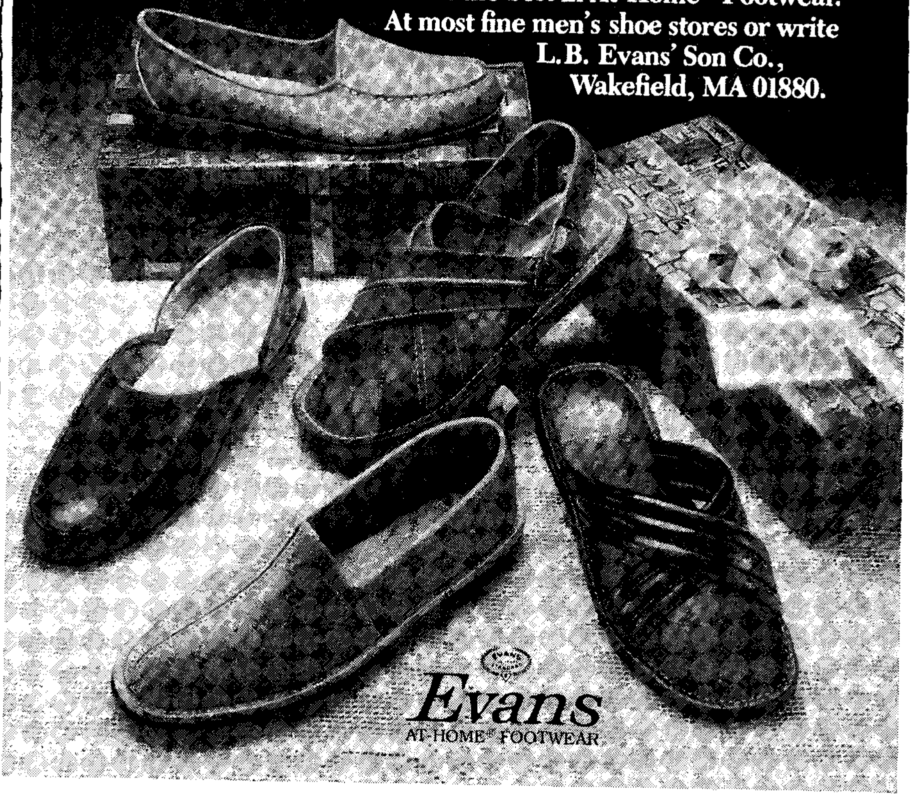

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MUSICAL EVENTS

Living Opera

THE Opera Company of Boston, whose twenty-first season has just ended, with the American première of Michael Tippett's "The Ice Break," has at last acquired a home of its own: the Savoy Theatre, on Washington Street—downtown, large, handsome, handily close to three subway lines. The company in its early years, as the Opera Group, did most of its work in the Donnelly Memorial Theatre. From 1965 to 1968, it played in the Back Bay Theatre; there Luigi Nono's "Intolleranza" and Schoenberg's "Moses and Aaron" had their American premières. The Back Bay was demolished in 1968; after a season in the Shubert and two peripatetic seasons, the troupe perched for seven years in the theatre called sometimes the Aquarius and sometimes the Orpheum. There I watched and heard Sarah Caldwell, on a small, shallow stage and with an orchestra spilling over into what in this country is also termed the orchestra, work her miracles: produce in "I Capuleti," "Benvenuto Cellini," the uncut 1867 "Don Carlos," and Glinka's "Russlan and Lyudmila" some of America's most exciting operatic evenings; give the long-awaited American première of Roger Sessions' rich, noble "Montezuma." The Orpheum was a shabby, not unattractive place. Miss Caldwell learned how to turn some of its limitations to dramatic advantage. But it was cramped and uncomfortable both in sound and for the spectators. The Savoy, a Thomas Lamb building of 1928, is a very grand affair of marble and gold and rich red stuffs, of columns and mirrors and glittering chandeliers. Lamb's best-known palaces in New York tend to show Babylonian exuberance (Loew's 175th Street is the most opulent, and the Pythian Temple, on West Seventieth Street, the oddest), but the Savoy is in his French manner; it owes something to Jules Hardouin-Mansart and something to Charles Garnier—a people's Versailles on the Opéra scale.

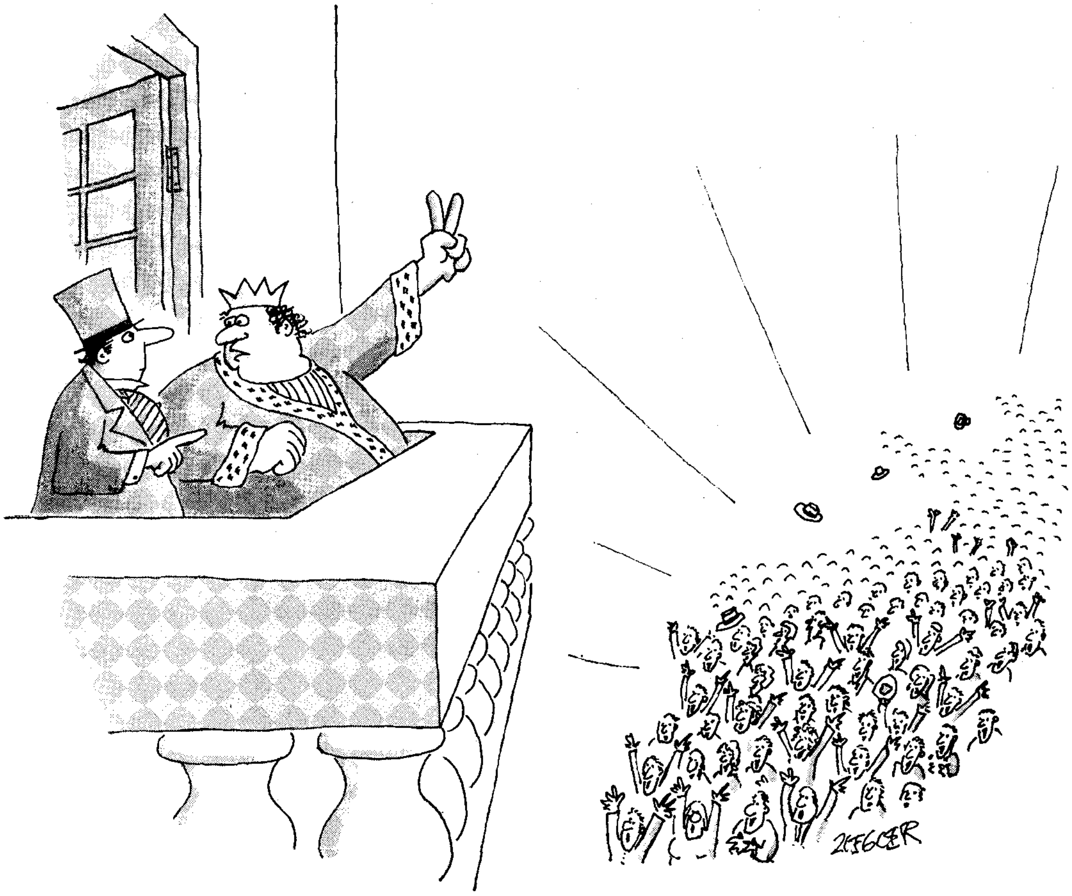
The Savoy, called the B. F. Keith Memorial Theatre when it opened, lasted only a year as a "live" theatre—Al Jolson and George M. Cohan were on the opening bill—and then went over to movies (largely but not entirely; I met Bostonians there who remembered hearing their first Gilbert and Sullivan from its balcony). It stands on the site of the old Boston Theatre, built in 1854, where Grisi and Mario sang, where later the Met gave its first out-of-town performances. The grand entrance is on Washington Street, but there is also an approach from the Common; an arcade runs through the building, past the stage door, shopfronts, and offices, and divides the box office and the grand foyer. On one of the plate-glass windows, the company's rehearsal schedules were crayonned. The "opera arcade" should become a regular shortcut taken by Bostonians eager to follow the activities of their company. Perhaps the whole quarter will now, like Covent Garden after the vegetable market moved out, sport attractive restaurants, cafés, exhibition galleries open late, even gardens. (There's an empty lot opposite the Savoy that could be made into a pleasant garden.) Boston has always seemed to me a rather civilized sort of city, where such things could happen.

Theatres like the Savoy—and Loew's 175th Street, Loew's Paradise in the Bronx before it was "doubled" and then "tripled," Loew's Kings in Brooklyn, the Brooklyn Paramount, which is now a basketball court, and a hundred others—are to America what the abbeys are to Britain. Thomas Lamb, John Eberson, George and C. W. Rapp, Timothy L. Pflueger, and B. Marcus Priteca are in a way America's William of Sens, William of Wynford, and Henry Yevele. Short-term commercial greed was their Henry VIII. (C. W. Rapp's 1925 remark "Balaban & Katz theatres are put up to last forever" makes wry reading today.) Their works that remain face the same problems as Britain's remaining abbeys: When congregations and audiences have shrunk, who is to pay for the upkeep of the huge edifices? In some cities, the performing arts have been able to take over where the movies failed. The Oakland Paramount (Pflueger, 1931) is now the home of the Oakland Symphony, Loew's Penn (Rapp & Rapp, 1927) of the Pittsburgh Symphony, Loew's Ohio (Lamb, 1928) of the Columbus Symphony, the St. Louis Theatre (Rapp & Rapp, 1926) of the St. Louis Symphony, the Vancouver Orpheum (Priteca, 1927) of the Vancouver Symphony. Loew's State in Providence (Rapp & Rapp, 1928) has become a performing-arts center.

The orchestras I have heard in some of these places have sounded fine—sometimes distant, but no more so than in modern concert halls of comparable vastness. But over the Savoy as an opera house there does hang a question mark: it is too big for opera on anything but the grandest scale to make a quick, immediate impact right through the house. It seats about twenty-eight hundred people. Fifteen hundred (the capacity of Venice's Fenice, Palermo's Teatro Massimo) was as many people as Walter Felsenstein ever wanted any of his productions to play to; his own house, the Berlin Komische Oper, held thirteen hundred and thirty-eight. Eighteen hundred (Bayreuth) is acceptable. The Opéra and the Munich State Opera hold around two thousand, and the Bolshoi holds a hundred more. When one goes much over that figure, difficulties begin, and the twenty-two-hundred-odd houses (Kennedy Center, Covent Garden) just about reach the limit of places where both Mozart and Wagner can satisfactorily be played. Of course, these are rough generalizations. Much depends on individual acoustics and also on the way an audience is packed in. (The Vienna State Opera is listed as a sixteen-hundred-and-forty-two-seater, but the *Stehplatz* brings its capacity up to just over two thousand. The Scala is variously listed as seating twenty-two hundred and holding thirty-six hundred; the latter figure is no doubt reached on those nights when the top two tiers can seem like the subway at rush hour.) It's not just a matter of being able to *hear*. In the very large New York State Theatre and in the enormous Met, one can usually hear what is going on, but few voices set the whole of those huge spaces ringing. Moreover, glances, fleeting facial expressions form an important part of opera. "The Ice Break" had a production last year in Kiel, whose opera house seats nine hundred and eighty-four, and by all accounts it told strongly there. In Boston, I was sitting near the front and so could admire some delicate acting whose details could hardly have reached to the back rows. The voices were pepped up with a discreet touch of electric amplification—not obtrusive, not really noticeable. This is a controversial matter. The Met uses amplification in the bigger houses it plays on tour. Julius Rudel proscribed it in the State Theatre, and sometimes I have thought him too rigorous. Is there any moral objection to thus rectifying the acoustic faults of a place? Is it wrong to use any means available to make a performance more vivid, more enjoyable? I'll leave those difficult questions, and note merely that the Savoy is a theatre, like the Orpheum, in which Miss Caldwell found it advisable to use some amplification. However, there are plans to make the stage larger and the auditorium smaller. Perhaps then it will no longer be needed. All the same, Miss Caldwell deserves a fifteen-hundred-seater, and I hope one day she gets it. Some may declare an opera house of that size uneconomic, but "Menotti's Law"—an axiom I once heard Gian Carlo Menotti expound—has, so far as I know, never been disproved: the larger the theatre, the larger the subsidy it requires.

I WROTE at length about "The Ice Break" after its première, two years ago, at Covent Garden (which commissioned the work, and which last month revived it for five performances). In brief, the work rises from a visionary composer's contemplation of the violence, oppression, and strife that rack the world and of the limited yet intense consolations, the small occasions for hope, that can save mankind from despair. The characters are, as it were, versions of Solzhenitsyn, confronting the Western world after years in a Soviet prison camp, and of Muhammad Ali, proclaiming a simple creed of Black is Beautiful and Best; the variously bewildered, questing, and easily swayed young; an émigré housewife lifted by suffering to rapt, poetic utterance; and a young black nurse whose natural compassion (her name is Hannah, "grace") makes her the instrument of a healing more than physical. Most serious operas proceed by historical analogy or mythological metaphor, but three of Tippett's four operas ("King Priam" is the exception) deal with contemporary themes in a contemporary setting. "The Midsummer Marriage," a song of joy, is an abundant lyrical outpouring of natural and archetypal imagery as an expression of essential human nature. In "The Knot Garden," seven characters bring their cares to a private place and there, in conflicts and combinations, weave patterns of the outside world. "The Ice Break" is set squarely in that world. Three crowd scenes, different presentations of unthinking, stereotyped emotion—a popular idol's welcome, a race riot, a hallucinatory mass "trip"—form its three acts; at the same time, we enter the minds and interlocked lives of six individuals affected by and trying to comprehend the events around them. It is a very difficult opera to sing, to play, and to stage.

The Covent Garden première was an elegant, polished production, with expert individual performances and a brilliant conductor (Colin Davis, to whom the piece is dedicated). Ralph Koltai's set was a complicated, ingenious, and beautiful construction. Sam Wanamaker's staging was deft. I admired it, but there were people who missed the searing, tender drama beneath that smoothly accomplished presentation. ("A schema of contemporary dramatic cliché" was one colleague's phrase.) The Boston production, staged and conducted by Miss Caldwell, was tough, violent, direct, and accurate, yet no less tender or poetic. And one seemed to hear more of what was happening in the music. Perhaps the playing *was* more expressive, the instrumental balance more carefully handled. Perhaps the force and truth of the staging illumined the sense of the score more clearly. Certainly I felt that Miss Caldwell had gone deeper into the work than Mr. Wanamaker. Herbert Senn's and Helen Pond's scenery was plain and serviceable. Marcia Dixcy's and Polly P. Smith's costumes were strong. Everything came together in a production that included some touches of high technical wizardry but never drew unseemly attention to them. Moreover, the vision that an English composer shaped as American scenes—even though they are formalized, not meant to be realistic—took on new aspects in this American performance. The racial street battle that in London had seemed so formal became in Boston something closer to verismo—a ritual enactment of what had happened and might happen again in the Boston streets. The acid trip was plainly closer to the understanding of the young Boston choristers than it had been to the ladies and gentlemen of the Covent Garden chorus. The last of the four performances was broadcast by WGBH and carried in New York by WNYC. I listened to it here, while fog swirled over the city, and Han-



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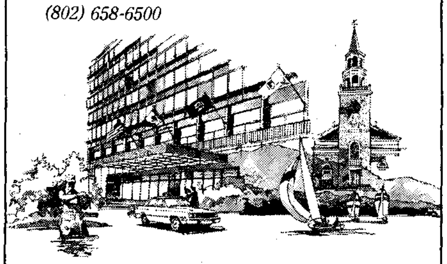

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nah's central aria—a song of love and distress, "Blue night of my soul, blue-black within this city's night," with memories of Bessie Smith deep within it, and the fierce, terrifying music of hate and anger before and after it—made an overwhelming effect.

Hannah was Cynthia Clarey; she was warm, grave, and beautiful. All in the cast—Arlene Saunders and Richard Fredricks as the Russian couple, Nadia and Lev; Jake Gardner as their American son; Leigh Munro as his silly, enthusiastic girlfriend; Curtis Rayam as the black popular hero; Bruce Reed as the doctor; Jeffrey Gall and Adelle Nicholson uniting their voices in the utterances of Astron, the psychedelic messenger—gave precise and communicative performances. Miss Saunders' tender, radiant death scene, exquisitely judged, never overdone, and Mr. Fredricks' delivery of the final lines (a noble passage from Goethe's "Wilhelm Meister," nobly set) were especially eloquent. "The Ice Break" is brief: there was seventy-five minutes of music in London, eighty-three in Boston. Every phrase has to tell. And in this performance every phrase did tell. Other soloists who should be mentioned are Chris Krueger (flute), André Lizotte (clarinet), Steven Young (bassoon), Richard Burgin (violin), and Winifred Mayes (cello). In this extraordinary, inspired piece, timbres, harmonies, melodic steps, and stage actions conspire to affect a listener in a way that defies cool analysis. At the end of Act II, Tippett sketches the possibility of some reconciliation between races, cultures, and generations by bringing together electric guitar, bass guitar, solo violin, and solo cello, accompanying two silent figures, Hannah and Lev. It seems schematic in prescription, but the sounds prove wonderfully moving.

Can I find anything about the production to criticize? Only that in the crowd scenes the sharp distinction between singing chorus and dancing corps (choreography by Tally Beatty) was awkward. But the reason for that was plain: more choral motion, and the singing would have been less accurate. The force, expressiveness, and rhythmic incisiveness of the crowds (chorus master William Huckaby) was one of the great strengths of the evening. In every way, Tippett's opera was memorably revealed. This "Ice Break" is one of Miss Caldwell's and the Boston company's high achievements.

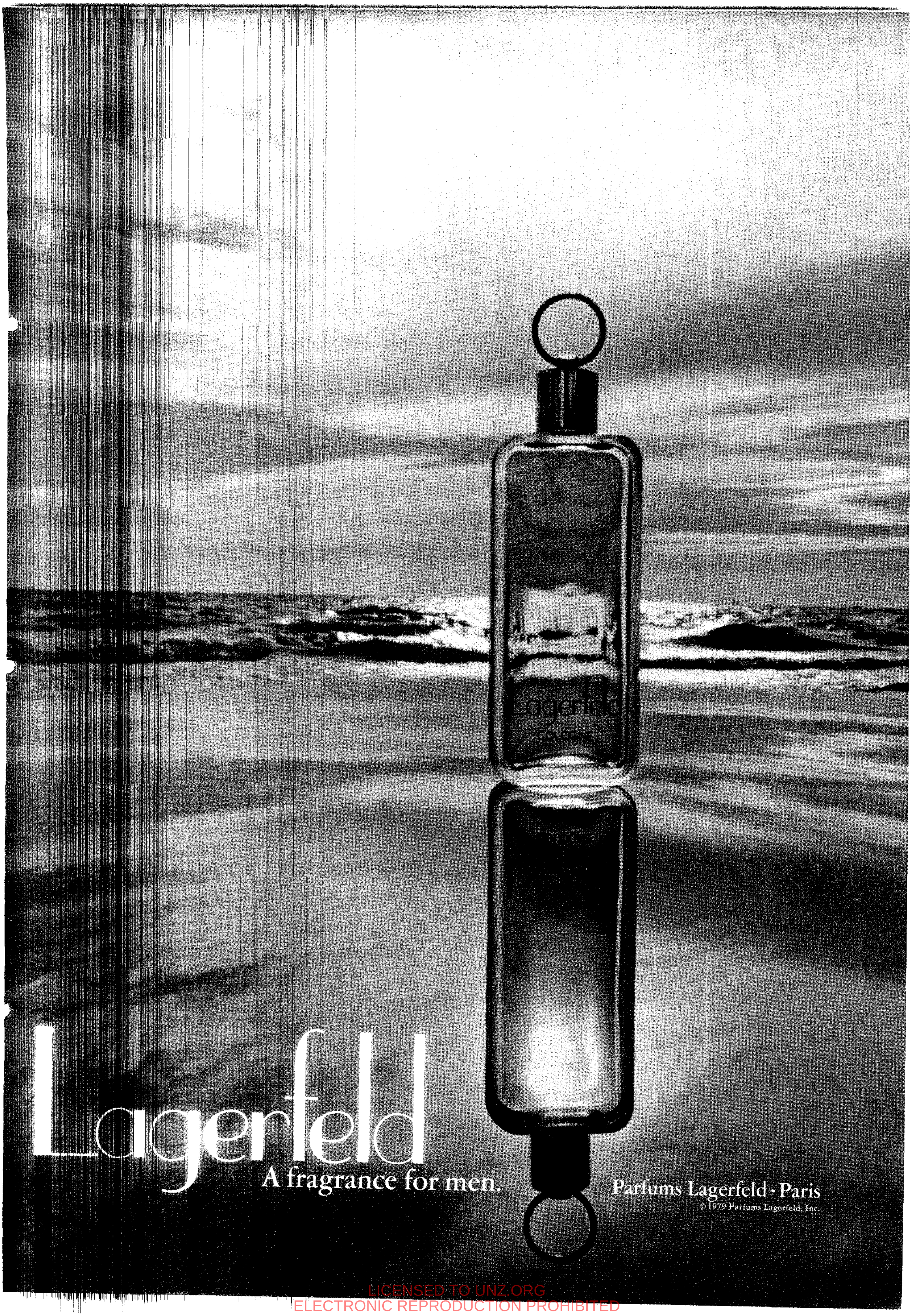
PETER MAXWELL DAVIES' opera "The Two Fiddlers" was composed for the children of Kirkwall Grammar School, Orkney, and first performed at the St. Magnus Festival last year. The Orcadian children took it on a tour of Italy. In London, the Royal Opera presented a Christmas run of eighteen performances (not in Covent Garden) with children from Pimlico School. The American première was given in April by the preparatory division of the Manhattan School of Music.

"The Two Fiddlers" is based on Orkney matter and on Orkney music. They still fiddle on the islands. (During each St. Magnus Festival, the Orkney Strathspey and Reel Society has held a concert; a record of Orkney fiddle music is distributed in this country by Peters International.) In the opera, the fiddlers Gavin and Storm, on their way home from a wedding, are surprised by trolls. Storm plays tunes for them, and as a reward they offer to grant him a wish. Orcadian life is hard; Storm wishes "that my people may never have to work again, so that they can enjoy themselves, always and forever!" The trolls seize on it: "No more crofting, no more fishing, no more work at all! If they're granted this we shall have them in our power." During Storm's minutes in the troll mound, twenty-one years have passed outside. He returns home to find the islanders grown fat and lazy, spending hours and hours in front of television sets, and eating commercially prepared food. Gavin has acquired a house (bought with a mortgage), a car, a life-insurance policy, a paunch; for exercise, he plays golf. "We don't have fiddle music anymore—We just put on the record-player, very loud." So Storm says:

> I must make up a new tune,
> To break the spell,
> And make them work again,
> A new piece of music,
> To make them dance
> And work for their daily bread.

With a lively set of reels on his fiddle, Storm wakes them. A haggis is piped in to celebrate the occasion. But the trolls add a warning to the festive finale: they have insidious ways of returning, of regaining control.

The libretto, the composer's own, is elaborated from an old Orkney tale retold by George Mackay Brown (whose powerful novel "Greenvoe" tells in realistic terms of an Orkney isle and its ancient, living culture under invasion from the new technological destroyers). The plot has connections with Stravinsky's "The Soldier's Tale." That work, too, plays tricks with time; it, too, asks "What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the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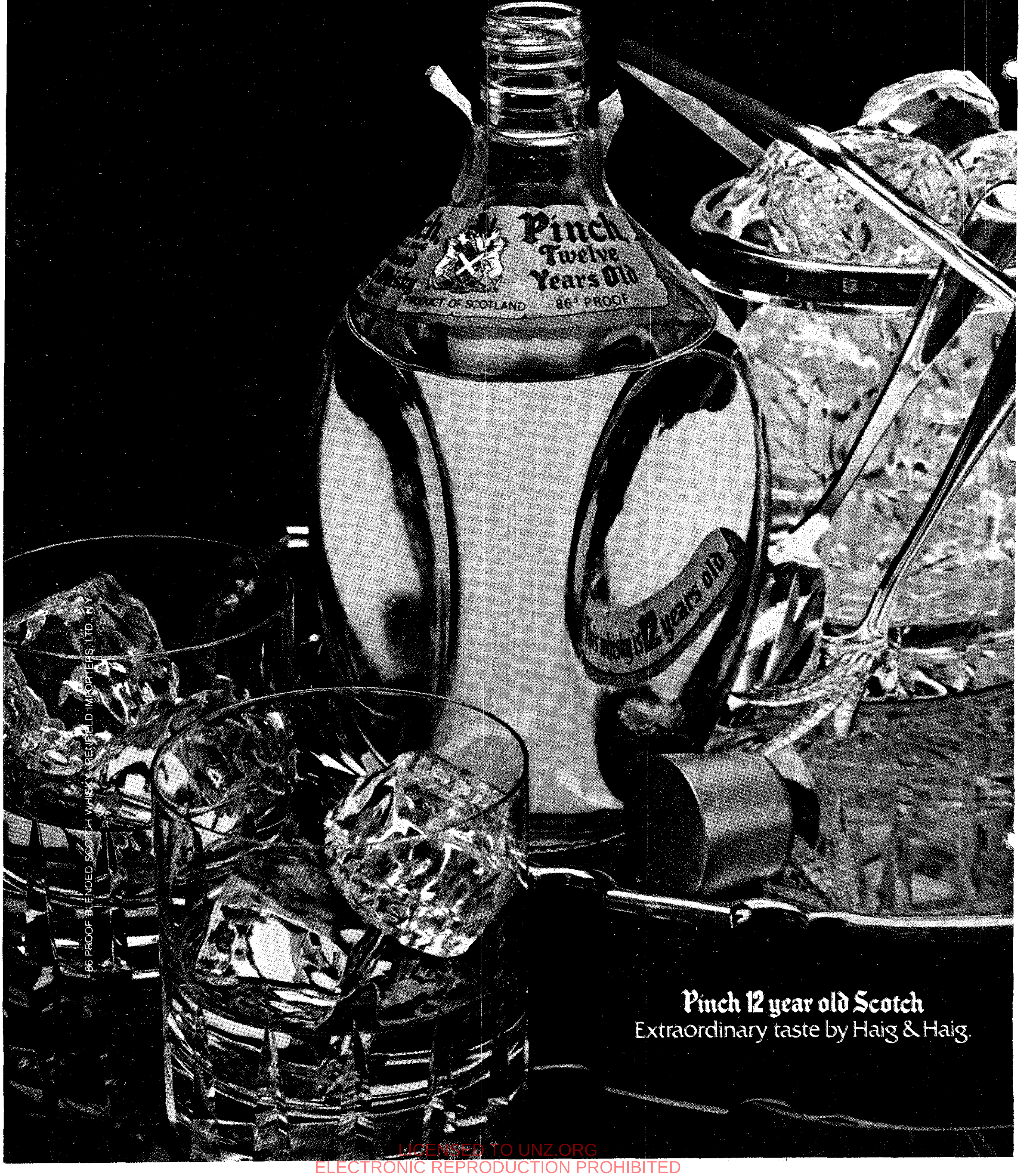
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whole world, and lose his own soul?" and uses fiddle tunes as a symbol of the soul. The subject matter is topical at a time when oil is replacing fish as the richest North Sea harvest, when multinational corporations are coming to Orkney; and it lies close to the heart of a composer who has gone to live on Orkney to escape the physical and moral corruption of big-city life. On the upper West Side, some of the references must have seemed exotic. On the simplest level, there is the line, from an islander bored by "telly" commercials, "Switch to the *other* station—it must be better than that." (It isn't; Davies' catchy commercial jingles, for Trollo Pills to cure all ills, Trollomatic vacuum cleaners, Trollup to eat, Trollka to drink, are replaced by a soap opera, "Trollville Place.") And a cure for the curses of capitalism is a shade too easily stated. Still, although "The Two Fiddlers" is charged with a moral, the message is not spelled out didactically. As Kurt Weill said of "Mahagonny," another anti-capitalist opera, the piece is meant to be fun as well as "an experience."

In the Manhattan production, directed and conducted by Cynthia Auerbach, the cast, of over a hundred, aged from five to eighteen, plainly enjoyed itself. But the presentation was slightly low-voltage. In previous productions, the title roles were taken by boys who could both fiddle and sing; here the fiddling came from the pit, and the actors of the parts were somewhat pallid—too careful, too polite. Miss Auerbach should have urged them to hit their lines harder. The set designer, Linda Conaway, got some things wrong (against the tenor of the tale to make the record-player, belching hard rock, a windup Victrola). Yet, on the whole, this was a big, enthusiastically mounted show. The piece is a "real opera" for children to create (there is no condescension in the score), and one that may possibly set them questioning aspects of life which elsewhere they are taught to take for granted. —ANDREW PORTER

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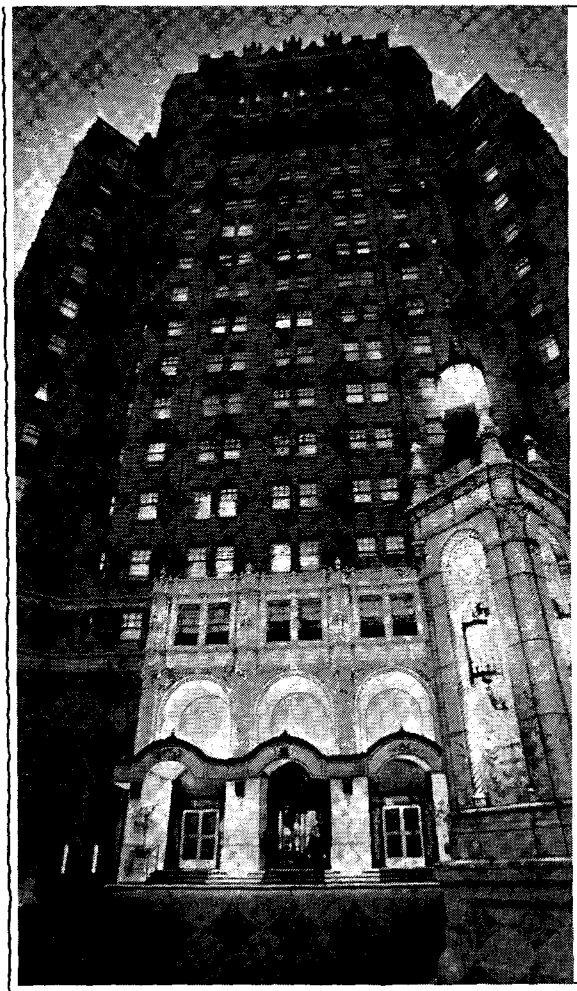

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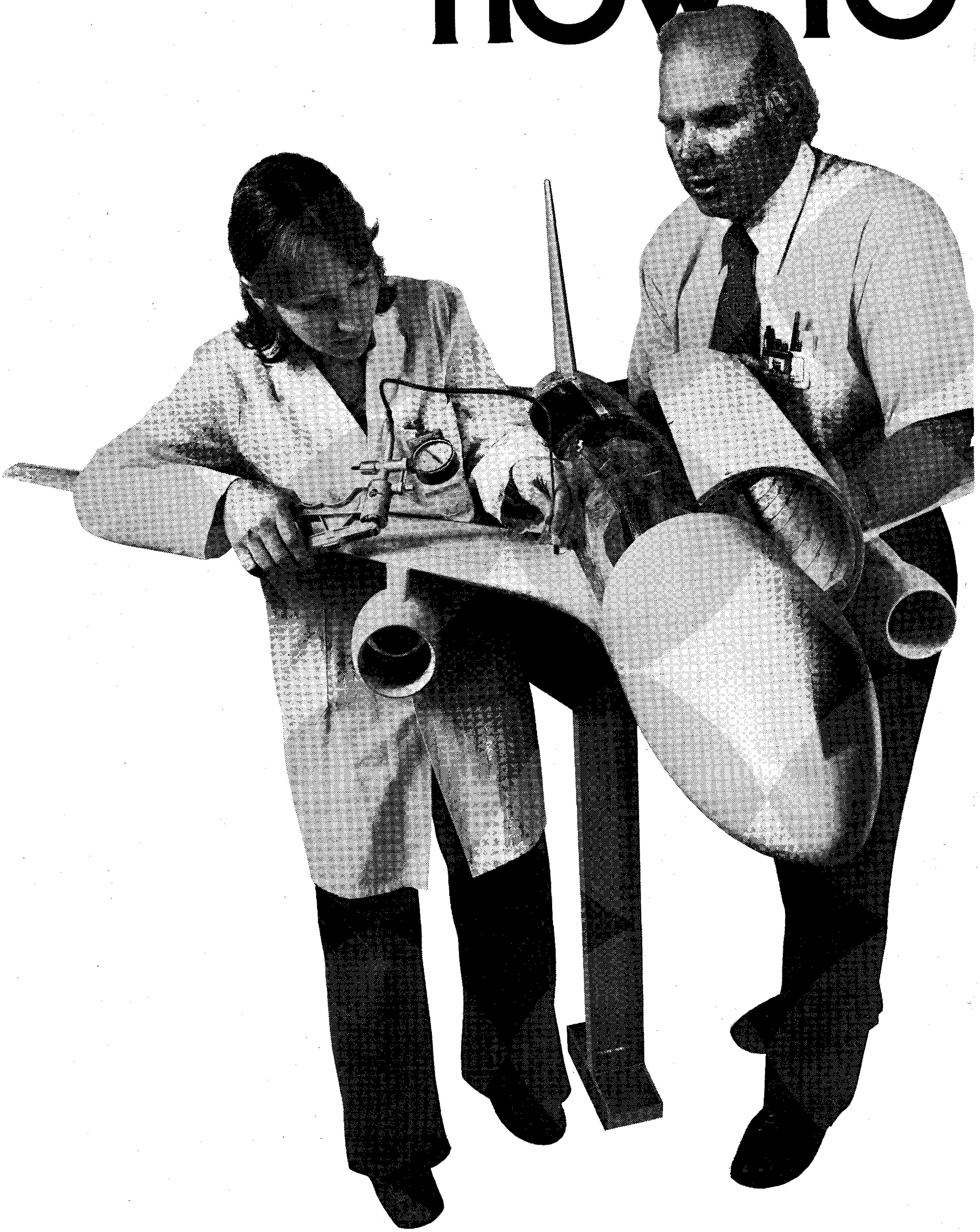

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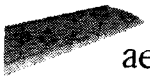

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"Swan Lake" and Its Alternatives

WHY is it that the record companies do not keep up with developments in ballet? Three years ago, when "Chaconne" was first done by the New York City Ballet, I could not buy a complete recording of the dance music from Gluck's "Orpheus" which Balanchine uses (the Monteux recording had been deleted from the catalogue), and I still can't buy one. Nor can I find all the selections from the "Pelléas" and "Shylock" of Fauré which Balanchine uses in "Emeralds." Nicolas Nabokov's "Don Quixote," a full-evening ballet, was, like it or not, a distinguished commission, but it ran its thirteen-year course in repertory without ever being recorded—not even in the form of a suite. In England, the work not just of composers but also of choreographers is honored: there are discs for Frederick Ashton's "La Fille Mal Gardée," "Monotones," and "A Month in the Country." When was the last time an American label honored a Balanchine ballet besides "Stars and Stripes"? These omissions reveal, all too openly, an indifference to our dance culture. One can't help being disappointed by the record companies' attitude; still, one doesn't expect them to care as much for culture as for commerce. The strange thing is that they're indifferent even to the popularity of ballet. It comes as a shock to discover that there are still no complete recordings of the charming scores for "La Sylphide," the Shades scene in "La Bayadère," and "Harlequinade," or of Prokofiev's finest ballet, "The Prodigal Son." These ballets, after all, have been around a long time, and current box-office idols perform them. When it comes to hits in the making, the record manufacturers don't seem to know what's going on. Sheer greed should have led them to contrive tie-ins with "Dances at a Gathering" and "Vienna Waltzes." The commercial appeal of the Stuttgart Ballet ("Eugene Onegin," "The Taming of the Shrew") and the Alvin Ailey company ("Revelations") is virtually untapped. Many of the ballet records in the stores have been there from the days, twenty or thirty years ago, when records were more responsive to events. If Hershy Kay's arrangements for "Stars and Stripes" and "Cakewalk" are steadily available, why not also his "Who Cares?" and "Union Jack"?

Where the record companies have been good in recent years is in issuing the most popular nineteenth-century ballets. Until 1974, there was not a single stereo recording of "The Sleeping Beauty" in its entirety. Now one can buy scrupulously complete and sumptuously engineered recordings of all the Tchaikovsky classics, and even a record of the ballet music from his operas. In spite of a few dubious spin-offs (such as "Baryshnikov's 'Nutcracker' "), the records keep to a high level of authenticity. I believe "The Sleeping Beauty" plays better in the theatre when it is cut—specifically, when Acts II and III are merged. A complete "Swan Lake" would last nearly four hours. But theatrical practice should not govern recordings. Contemporary ballet records may be getting too complete. Even the best of them force us to listen to repeats that can make sense only in the theatre. And in the case of "Swan Lake" authenticity can lead to confusion for listeners who have seen the ballet. The "Swan Lake"s that are being marketed are all versions of the complete edition of the score that was issued in Moscow in 1957. Every note that was ever written by Tchaikovsky for the ballet is here. Yet the Moscow score, like every previous published score, is based on the original edition of 1877—the Ur-"Swan Lake," which has never made its appearance in a theatre. Nearly all of the "Swan Lake"s we see derive from the St. Petersburg production of 1895. Notes for the current recordings invariably cite the changes that were made in 1895, but they also recount the ballet's plot events in relation to its unchanged musical structure, as if this were the way the ballet was actually given at its world première. What little information we have on that 1877 Moscow production suggests that although the choreographer, Wenzel Reisinger, followed Tchaikovsky's scenario as it then stood (this was also revised for St. Petersburg), he had no compunction about ignoring the composer's musical divisions. A performance score from this production has not survived, so we don't know how much of the published score was actually heard by Moscow audiences. What seems certain is that as the ballet piled up performances and went through new productions they heard less and less. In spite of this rough handling, and in spite of choreography that was universally condemned, all the Moscow productions appear to have been very favorably received. Roland John Wiley, in an unpublished doctoral dissertation on "Swan Lake," from which I have drawn much of the historical information in this article, notes that the Moscow "Swan Lake"s have been thought of as failures because the St. Petersburg version enjoyed such a lasting success. Produced by Marius Petipa and Lev Ivanov, with the music revised by Riccardo Drigo, the world-famous 1895 version is comparatively well documented. We have Petipa's sketchbooks, and the choreography exists in Stepanov notation, so we can make pre- and post-production comparisons. (Petipa planned but apparently did not use a maypole in Act I, perhaps because a late-summer, early-autumn setting was specified.) But the important comparison is with the "Swan Lake" of 1877—Tchaikovsky's score not as it was produced but as it was published. While our record companies give us this "Swan Lake," our ballet companies give us the "definitive" one, which means a modified Act I, an Act III revised almost beyond recognition of Tchaikovsky's original premise, and an Act IV pieced out by substantial interpolations. These, and Odile's variation, are Drigo's orchestrations of piano pieces by Tchaikovsky. Later hands that dealt with the score also left their mark on it, and they were not as subtle as Drigo. In Act II, which the composer considered the best part of his ballet, the editing was relatively light, but here, too, as Wiley explains, Drigo interfered with the symbology of Tchaikovsky's harmonic scheme.

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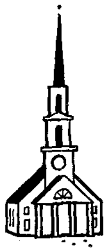
ed on the composer and his instinct for the theatre. Although he sought advice from his choreographer—the kind of detailed advice which he was later to obtain from Petipa for "The Sleeping Beauty" and "The Nutcracker"—he appears to have been on his own much of the time. The score, unlike the two later ones, is badly organized in terms of theatre logic and stagecraft. When, occasionally, we hear something going on—when the trumpet fanfares constantly interrupt the waltz in the ballroom scene—it sounds like an awkward attempt at a stage direction. Tchaikovsky was the first great composer in a hundred years to write a full-scale ballet. He loved "Giselle," and probably used it as a guide, but his leitmotivs are closer to Wagner's than to Adam's. (Wiley also builds the case for a " 'Lohengrin' connection" to "Swan Lake," citing thematic and melodic similarities.) There is no question of his instinct for dance; this, combined with his sense of theatrical fantasy, operates freely in "Swan Lake," but it does not operate practically. Even in the most famous scenes—the swan scenes, created by Ivanov—we feel that the music is suggesting more than is really happening on the stage. In the standard Act IV, the gulf between the music and the action is a painful fact that convention forces us to ignore. "Swan Lake" is the greatest unstageable ballet ever written, and it is at its greatest, perhaps, in those passages—usually left out of productions—when we cannot guess what is happening or what Tchaikovsky meant by them. Yet their visionary allure is so strong that we make a place for them anyway in our minds. "Swan Lake" may be unstageable, but it is never unreal. When Tchaikovsky, having finished the score, heard "Sylvia," he remarked with characteristic overstatement that his own work was "trash by comparison." He meant that "Sylvia" was a ballet.



Can the Ur-"Swan Lake" ever be wrested from its composer's imagination and brought to the stage? There have been sporadic attempts. The best known, by Vladimir Burmeister, took place in Moscow in 1953 and in Paris in 1960, but Burmeister used a new scenario. The production is still danced at the Paris Opéra, complete with its egregious happy ending. Jack Carter's versions for the Teatro Colón in Buenos Aires (1963) and London Festival Ballet (1966) rearranged the 1877 score in an attempt to follow the original scenario. Neither of these productions succeeded in keeping Petipa-Ivanov off the boards for long. During the sixties, "Swan Lake" was put through a wave of experimentation in many lands; this was a response both to the 1957 edition of the score and to the impact of Soviet performance traditions as revealed by Western tours of the Bolshoi and the Kirov. The only innovation that has been roundly accepted is the deletion of Benno, the prince's friend, from the Act II adagio. The presence of the extra man in the pas de deux had a historical explanation, which was universally judged to be inadequate. But Benno's participation, besides making the pas de deux unlike any other in the world, was a poignant reminder of the prince's youth. If only for those now lost moments when Odette entered and poised herself on his outstretched arm instead of on Siegfried's ("The falcon cannot hear the falconer") or alighted on his thigh to be retrieved by Siegfried, I would wish to see Benno again. The best contributions to the innovative "Swan Lake"s of the sixties were Ashton's—especially his pas de quatre, which was retained when the Royal Ballet reverted to Petipa-Ivanov, and his Act IV, which will be restored this winter. Ashton used to great effect in this act the curious pounding dead march that Tchaikovsky placed in the pas de six of Act III—a passage as inscrutable as his inclusion in Act I of what we know as the Black Swan pas de deux.

The wave of experimentation was succeeded by a wave of reaction, and on the crest of this second wave American Ballet Theatre brought us its version of Petipa-Ivanov, staged by David Blair. This production spells "Swan Lake" to a good many people, even though its Act III wades right into the depths of the problem that confronts any producer of "Swan Lake"—the Odile problem (she was not designated the Black Swan until recent times), which is only partially solved by transferring the pas de deux from Act I. Blair forced a solution by perpetrating a key change at the start of the pas de deux worse than any wrought by Drigo. I don't suppose it matters. Like every "Swan Lake" I have ever seen, even the most misbegotten, this version invariably holds the audience under a spell. The corps choreography in the white acts, never strongly danced, has paled away, and in Acts I and III the aristocratic style needed for the dances and for what Alexandra Danilova calls "deportment" is caricatured. Nevertheless, because the action follows a credible outline laid down by men of sympathy and genius, one can sit and dream. Recently, I was asked how many times

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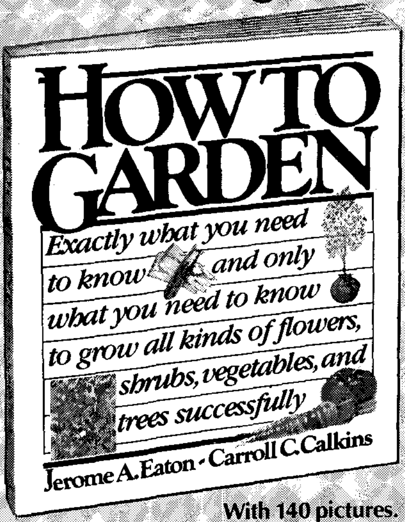
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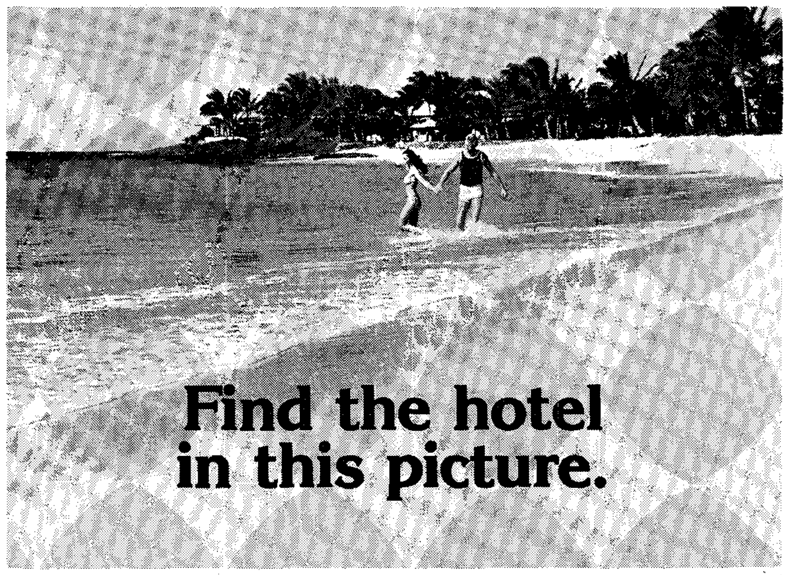

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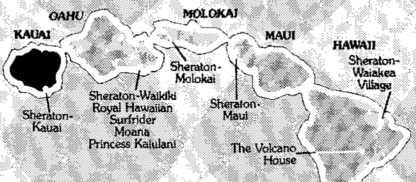

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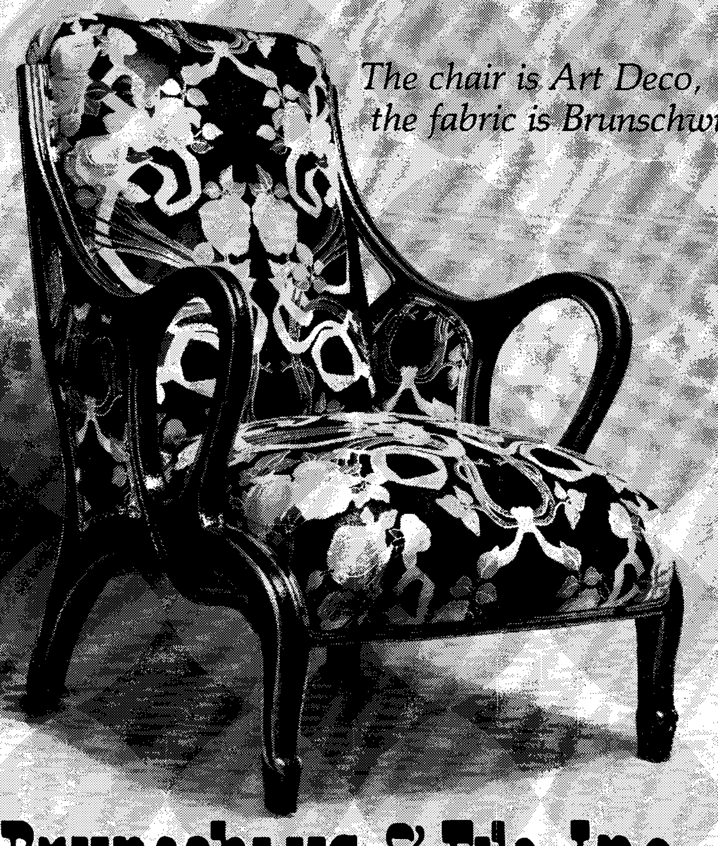

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I had seen "Swan Lake." Incredulity usually lurks in this question—an implied "How can you stand it?" Yet the answer is not "Because I love it." Like so many others, I go to "Swan Lake" not to re-see a ballet but hoping to see the ballet beyond the ballet. The performance is only the occasion for meditating on what might have been. Tchaikovsky's unrealizable vision is large enough to have made what one can see of it the most fascinating ballet in the world. At A.B.T., the ballet has become a star vehicle, and no Tchaikovsky ballet was meant to be that. One's meditations are necessarily provoked by this or that star performance. This season, I saw and enjoyed the performing of Natalia Makarova and Anthony Dowell, Martine van Hamel and Patrick Bissell, and Cynthia Gregory and Peter Breuer. The ballerinas are all at fault in taking the second act too slowly. Slow is a dancer's idea of serious, but the danger is that her accent will smear, her line turn ropy. Perhaps the ponderous second acts were what made Act IV look so bright in every case. And who created that pas de deux to the interpolation "Un Poco di Chopin"? Not Ivanov, surely, or he would have had to use Benno again, which would seem intolerable in this musical and emotional context. Since Roland John Wiley tells us that Nicholas Legat's Siegfried tried, early in the ballet's career, to dispense with Benno (but was overruled by balletomanes), it is probable that we are seeing Legat's emended pas de deux in Acts III and IV. For a popular masterpiece, too little is known of the lore of "Swan Lake." There are many, many reasons to await further researches by Wiley and by other Tchaikovsky scholars, such as David Brown, whose newly published "Tchaikovsky: The Early Years 1840-1874" (Norton) stops just short of "Swan Lake."

THIS season, Suzanne Farrell made one of her infrequent appearances in the Balanchine one-act "Swan Lake," and I meditated on what the Swan Queen might become if Farrell were given new choreography to perform. Everything she did stretched the old steps beyond their conventional limits; her port de bras was congenitally incapable of accepting the conventional poses. In Farrell, adagio dancing moves decisively away from the contained pose-to-pose evolutions that, even in Balanchine's advanced version, characterize Odette. She's some kind of great white northern bird who lifts the swan's pathetic whisper to a tragic cry. Balanchine's condensation does the same thing to the ballet. It is not just the second act that he gives us but a medley of the second and fourth acts, and no fourth-act finale has ever been so spectacular as the wheeling and diving of Balanchine's flock and the terrible isolation of his lovers as they withstand the fury of cosmic winds. Balanchine's ballet is a "Swan Lake" rhapsody; I am caught up in it as in no other version of the ballet, because, although it isn't *the* "Swan Lake," it's the essence of what attracts me in "Swan Lake." To mention just one moment: during the adagio (which is a jeweller's appraisal and resetting of Ivanov), the hunters come out and stand with a swan on each arm, and at once all the bewildering beauty of the ballet's fantasy about hunters and swans and sorcerers crystallizes in a single heraldic image. The choreographer has done my dreaming for me.

In the course of thirty-five minutes, Balanchine manages to use both of the Act IV musical interpolations. To me, this indicates his acceptance of these inventions of St. Petersburg as fragments of the true cross—there was no other "Swan Lake" and there never can be. Neither of these fragments is as well danced as in former days; in "Valse Bluette" the accents that were created for Marnee Morris's timing have been regularized, and "Un Poco di Chopin" (Odette's variation) is less a dance than a dramatic cameo with trills on point, perfect for the dancer it was choreographed for, Melissa Hayden, but for very few others. This season, however, the lovely pas de neuf (Tchaikovsky's "Dance of the Little Swans") took on life and warmth when its leader was Stephanie Saland or Lourdes Lopez (though some details in the choreography have disappeared). Rouben Ter-Arutunian's décor is still appropriate; his back cloth has the chill of Chesley Bonestell's lunar landscapes. But audiences may no longer feel so romantically remote from "Swan Lake." Since Balanchine mounted this production (1951, revised 1964), the four-act ballet has become familiar, and a version that was once an audience favorite now seems to generate moderate disdain. Weak casting of the ballerina role in the past few seasons hasn't helped. But audiences who have outgrown a one-act "Swan Lake" and whose curiosity has been aroused by the complete score on records will not find what they're looking for in the full staging. Luckily, Balanchine has produced several other essays on "Swan Lake." There is the great adagio in

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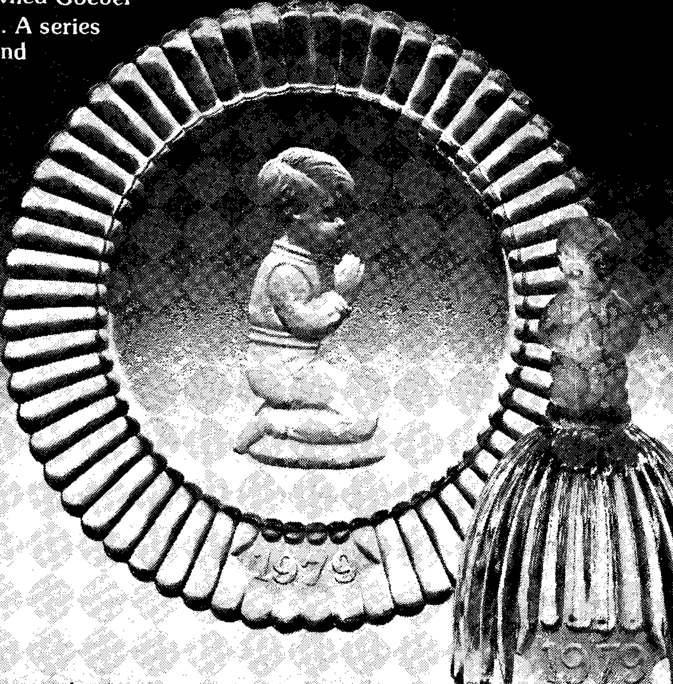

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"Symphony in C," which is an indirect descendant of Ivanov's adagio, and there is the second movement of "Diamonds," which descends from "Symphony in C." "Tchaikovsky Concerto No. 2" stands in relation to "Swan Lake" much as "Theme and Variations" stands to "The Sleeping Beauty." The resemblance is to be found more in moods than in steps. The closest "Concerto No. 2" comes to a quotation is in the second scene, when the ballerina approaches the kneeling "prince," takes a farewell arabesque, and backs away from him down a tunnel of arms that lift to let her pass. The choreography ranges over the whole of the old ballet, evoking a spectrum of genre scenes. The pas de trois of Act I has its reflection in a beautifully elegiac trio for a woman and two men, and much of Act I's nervous pomposity and glee is in this first movement of Balanchine's. The second movement is like a white act, and the folk dances of the last movement flashingly recapitulate the third act's suite of nationalist dances. But nothing in "Concerto No. 2" is outside Balanchine's personal world; he makes us feel that this poetic realm is his by inheritance. "Concerto No. 2" is one of those all-in-all ballets of his, like "The Four Temperaments" and "Prodigal" and "The Nutcracker"—ballets that sweep through every variety of emotion, tearing us this way and that. The grand perspectives of the piano concerto are dramatized in dancing that is spacious, clear, and, in human terms, temperate. The ballet's countenance is placid. Yet we are gripped by an underlying tension—the tension of scale and sweep and the more intimate tension of mood. It's a secret-cabinet, stifled-melodrama ballet. Somewhere deep inside the ballerina-danseur relationship we sense the dagger, the tea rose, the chain-mail glove: all the fun, in short, that "Swan Lake" should be. The ballet, a choral showpiece, is being luminously danced this season in new costumes, easier on the eye; the leads I saw were Merrill Ashley, Sean Lavery, and Kyra Nichols. It's the one, of course, that used to be called "Ballet Imperial": a beautiful title, no more confining than "Concerto Barocco."

—ARLENE CROCE

•

THE MYSTERIOUS EAST

[*From an adv. in the Bangladesh Observer*]

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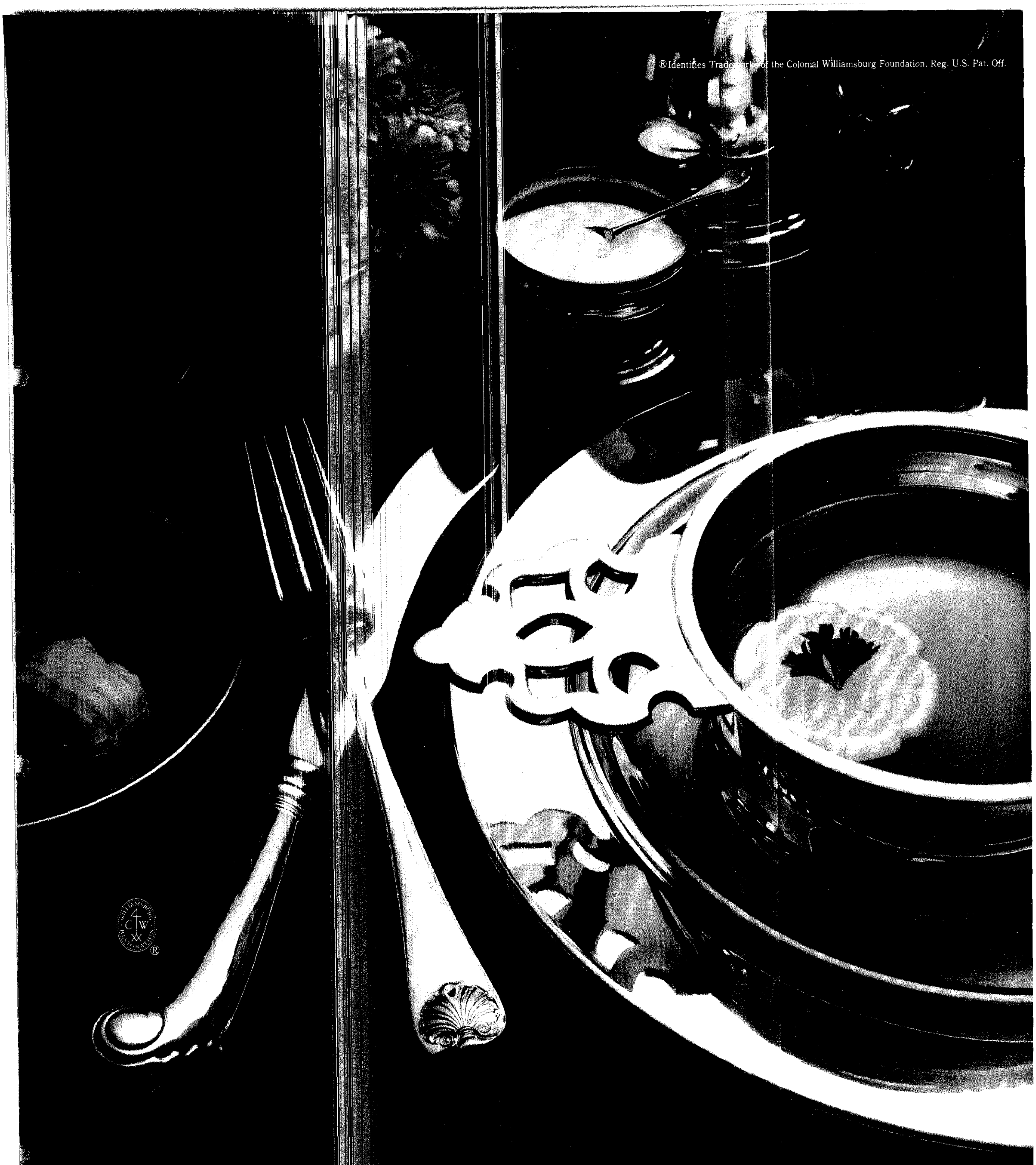

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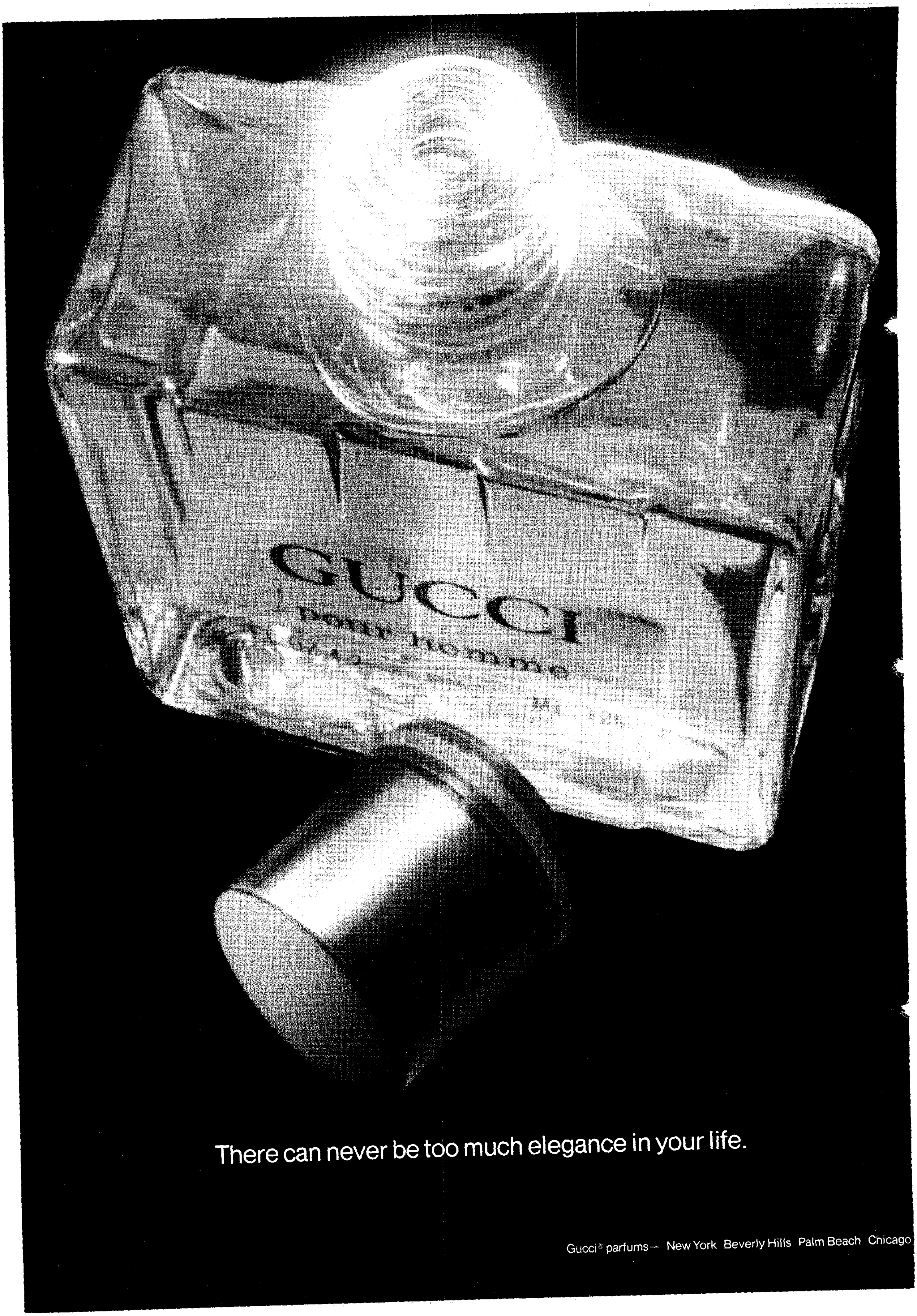
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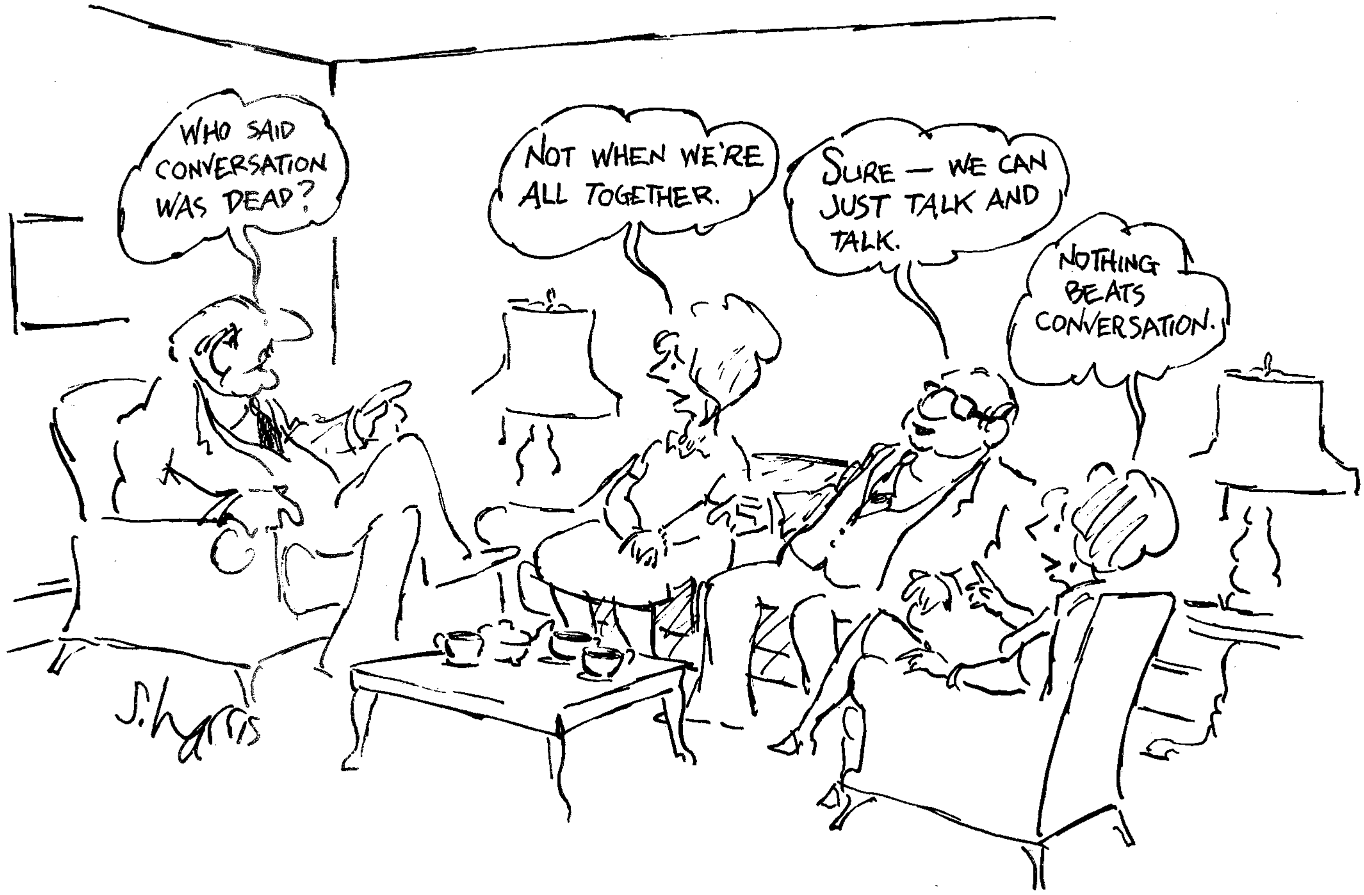
ON AND OFF THE AVENUE

FEMININE FASHIONS

THE greatest change in fashion these days may be the erosion of faith in change for change's sake. Designers are offering some widely varied possibilities for fall—including shorter, slimmer skirts and more strictly tailored coats and suits than have been around for a while—but shifts in color, silhouette, or hem length seem oddly unimportant to most women, and even to the designers who carry them out. Some vestige of the old pretense that new fashions should be acquired each season because last season's offerings are obsolete will remain as long as we have the machinery of publicity and advertising and a fashion business functioning in a capitalist world. But designers no longer have the power or the urge to impose a monolithic new look. Fashion has become a matter not of abstract creation but of communication—an exchange of feelings and attitudes between designers and the public. Geoffrey Beene, who refers to himself as a "conceptual" rather than a "fashion" designer, has said that fashion can no longer be defined as a pretty dress. We are hardly able to assess clothes in themselves, so accustomed have we become to pondering what they mean and how they fit in with life. Changes in design seem of small importance compared with what they tell us about changes in people. The New York designers, in their hundreds of different styles, reflect the new aspirations of women and provide the costumes to match women's changing roles.

If many styles of dress are possible, and changes of shape don't matter, can there be fashion at all? To assume that there won't be is to count without the public appetite for something more than mere clothes and without the fashion industry's inherent adaptability. For designers to share their customers' doubts about the value of novelty may seem schizophrenic, or even self-destructive. But designers have skillfully endorsed the notion of collecting different pieces for wardrobes that evolve naturally over a period of years. Adding fresh possibilities without replacing old favorites keeps customers contented and loyal. Designers are capable of balancing apparent contradictions that are often quite dramatic. They go to energetic lengths to put on shows that give a complete, readable statement of their precise vision of the moment—with carefully chosen music, the right setting, models acting in a specific way, distinctive accessories, and repetitions of a theme in alternative colors and fabrics. Yet all the while they are fully aware that women will probably buy only a single element of the whole to wear in the real world, with bits from other designers or earlier collections and with any old accessories they happen to own. In fact, many designers who contrive a "total look" for their shows would probably be horrified if they saw women adopting it lock, stock, and barrel. Designers, after all, have instincts for fashionable behavior. By now, it is distinctly unfashionable to go to the store and come away with the uniform of the very latest designer look. For several seasons, designers have been making noise about the supposed independence, self-knowledge, and individuality of their ideal customer. This season, these references have risen to a high tide and created the paradox that the perfect representative for the designer's message is the woman who successfully gives the impression of not caring about it. The only way she could really show she doesn't care, of course, would be by not bothering to wear his designs. It is the illusion of obliviousness of dress which the fashion world depends on, and not the fact of it.

Designers can perform remarkable feats of sleight of hand. Standard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clothes shapes—simple pants or jackets, classic sweaters, mannish bathrobes, oversized raincoats, even sweat pants—are reproduced and magically transformed into fashion. Calvin Klein and Ralph Lauren, in particular, have made their name by such transformations. For some time, I have been baffled at the shows of these two designers by the audience's enthusiasm for clothes that *are already the basic vocabulary of* modern dress. Admittedly, the clothes are made up in more interesting and costly fabrics than their functional originals, but this alone does not turn them into fashion. Somehow, by the time they reach the runway and the stores they are more than just clothes. They aren't anti-fashion, either. They have become fashion simply because enough people believe they are. The second, self-conscious look is what turns clothes into fashions. Fashion is the element that makes clothes feel a bit more significant and causes those who wear them to project themselves a touch or two larger than life. This extra significance may provide a partial explanation of why millions of Americans are wearing mass-produced bluejeans with the name of a designer on the back pocket. The commercial success of what is known as the "jeans-licensing phenomenon" has even Studio 54 planning to lend its name to jeans, and has a lot of people shaking their heads bemusedly. Is the public so unenlightened, so sheeplike, so insecure that it must sport a stranger's name on its pants seat in order to feel that it *exists*? One may see in the popularity of "fashion jeans" a depressing sign of craven conformism or else a clue to people's need for clothing that is comfortable, neutral, and more or less forgettable—but still retains a feeling of significance, a shade of fashion. (One might add that comfort and passing unnoticed are goals not always achieved by way of skintight pants in woven denim, but the idea is there.)

JEANS belong with the broad and persistent current of today's fashion which clearly sets priorities on healthy bodies and the sense of self and seems to play down the clothes themselves. In spite of some designers' present preoccupation with structured and often retrospective tailoring, it is the easygoing and body-conscious style that must prevail in the long haul. Perry Ellis is one of the talented designers working unmistakably in the modern mode. "The answer to what to wear is to know yourself," he said to me recently. "Any combination of things will be fine if you really know what works for you. I don't want people to end up like a Perry Ellis lady. Most people can express themselves, but they still get frightened and choose not to. Perhaps the majority will never be free, but the minority is growing, and influential. Too many men and women suffer from the illusion that clothes will bring happiness or cover up what they really are. It's people who make clothes sexy or sophisticated, or whatever, not the other way round. I like designing, and running my business. But on a scale of importance in my own life what I wear is near the bottom." Mitchell Gross, a new young designer, who succeeded Ellis at the firm of Portfolio, shares much of his predecessor's thinking about the need for lasting, easygoing clothes. Like him, Gross enjoys exploring the possibilities of freedom and shattering myths about who should wear what and when. "It's skin and bodies that are going to matter in the nineteen-eighties," he told me when we talked after the showing of his first, and remarkably authoritative, collection. "What counts is the women inside the clothes." The two designers have quite distinct styles—Ellis experimenting at the moment with unexpected combinations of color and hinting with pervasive wit at all-American collegiate classics, and Gross working toward a new definition of quiet, cosmopolitan-looking elegance with a muted palette and carefully chosen prints and textures—but their clothes are built on common attitudes and begin with comfort and ease. Theirs are clothes for women who take pride in a healthy body, but the clothes suggest the lines of it without resort to skintight fit. ("My body is tight," Ellis said. "Why would I need tight clothes?") The two generally avoid synthetic fabrics, because these lack the depth and integrity they aspire to in design, and because they do not think synthetics feel good next to the skin.

If designers such as Gross and Ellis are working with a new kind of fashion in which people and bodies are in harmony with the shape of comfortable clothes, those clothes still carry weight in their own right. Perhaps in time the balance will tip further and clothes will look patently subsidiary to the bodies inside them. We may finally be drawing closer to the age of throwing on a stretchy second skin. In the recent past, Danskin has greatly expanded the frontier of leotard and bodysuit dressing—introducing wild colors and new details of design, adding simple matching skirts to tops or leotards and launching them into discothèques and the streets. It may be argued that these developments for the mass market are of far greater long-range import than the schemes of top designers for the few. Americans are getting familiar with the sight of themselves and each other in exercise clothes. It was only rather recently, when the zest for physical fitness became a passion and a social activity, that "bodywear" moved beyond the merely functional and became a valid starting point for inventive design. (Rudy Gernreich, it is true, made pathbreaking experiments in the field in the late nineteen-fifties. But his most advanced ideas were unacceptable to ordinary women, who were still wearing girdles and bras.) The technology of stretch fabrics is constantly evolving, and new uses and fibre combinations are being explored. Manufacturers of skintight jeans are beginning to make them in Lycra mixtures—a logical development, and one that is likely to produce enormous changes in public consciousness. A few designers—notably Betsey Johnson, who has long been interested in leotard dressing—have recently come up with variations on the jump suit in brilliantly colored spandex or stretchy cotton knits. Norma Kamali continues to turn her fertile imagination to the possibilities of bodywear of all shapes in cotton-and-Lycra or nylon-and-Lycra mixtures. She foresees a time when second skins will form a substructure for fashion, if not the fashion itself. In the recent fall collections, even designers working with traditional tailoring and woven fabrics betrayed the pervasive influence of clothing for exercise and the dance by the attention they gave to leg warmers or other unusual forms of hose. After all, it is jogging suits, leotards, T-shirts, bluejeans, even the ubiquitous polyester double knits—and not Joan Crawford's shoulder pads—that are the source of the perennial strength of truly indigenous American style.

—KENNEDY FRASER

•

I would like to know the reason shy people with mopeds do not have to have a license?—*Waterville (Maine) Morning Sentinel.*

Because they're scared to leave their own driveway. Next question.

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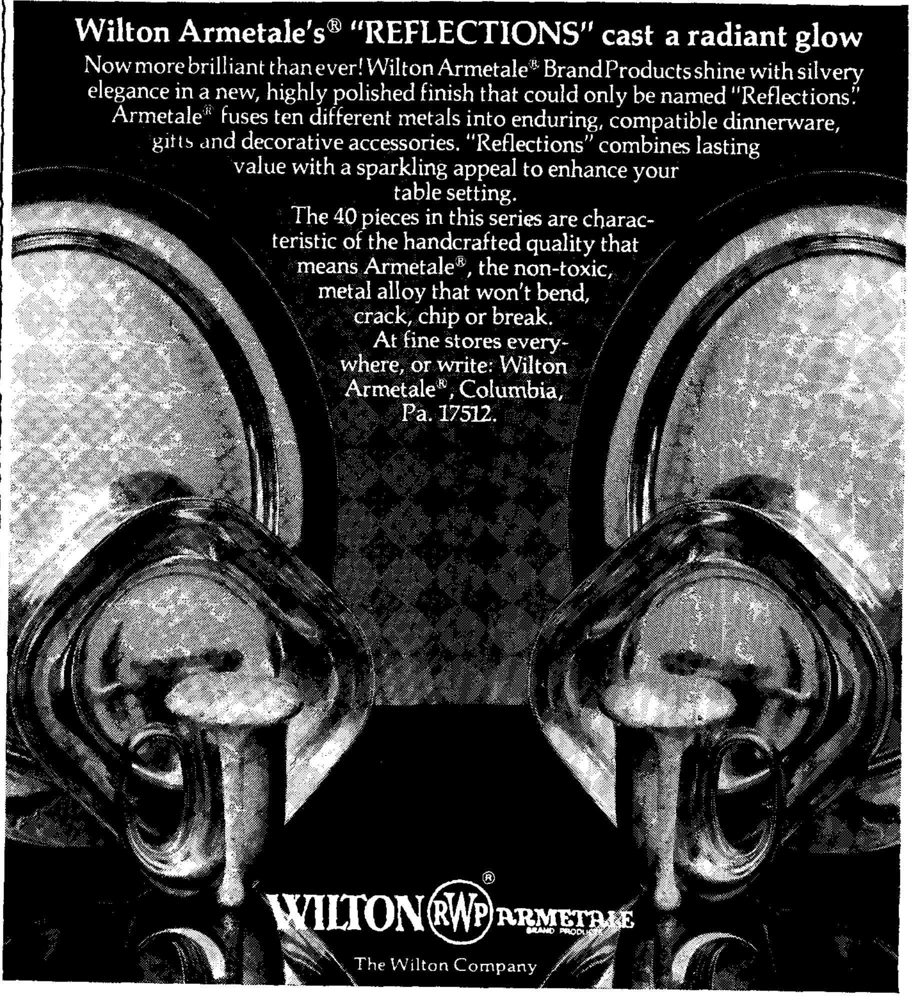

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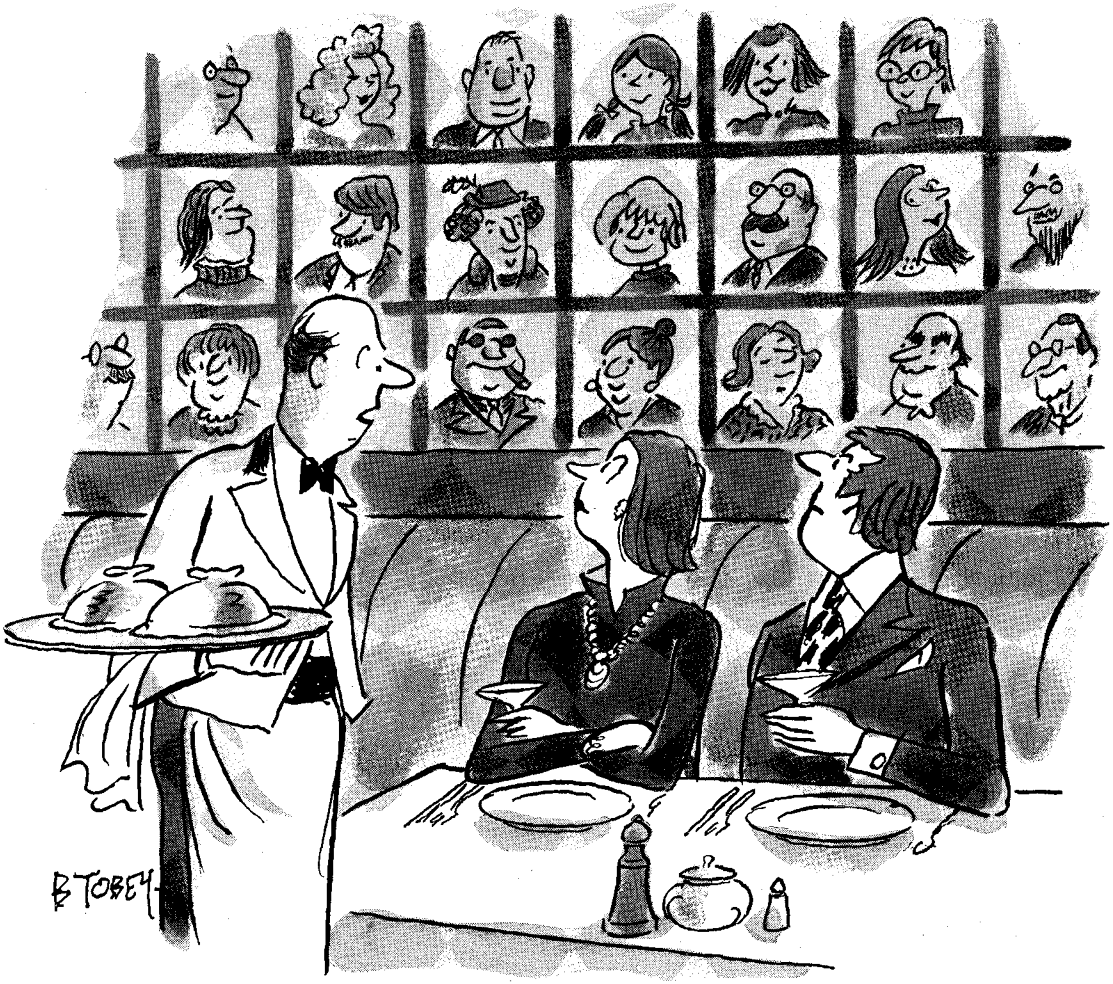
THE CURRENT CINEMA

Flying High

LADY VIOLET BONHAM CARTER is reputed to have said, "Outer space is no place for a person of breeding," and on the basis of what I sat through during the extended course of "Alien" I'm inclined to broaden the coverage of Her Ladyship's aphorism: Outer space appears to be unfit for anyone except slobs and blobs. The half-dozen slobs who make up the crew of the vast spaceship Nostromo are of ordinary human origin and of something less than ordinary human intelligence; their resourcefulness is as limited as their conversation, and all but one of them are readily killed off by a blob that is described as possessing a superior, totally amoral brain but whose only observable attributes are a voracious appetite and a distressing tendency to drool. A small yellow cat named Jones is aboard Nostromo and survives several perilous encounters with the blob, and from this fact one may deduce that the blob is itself something of a slob. As it proceeds from one revolting state of growth to the next, it is presumably gaining in intellect as well as size, but surely a blob that plays hob with slobs and yet cannot outspat a cat isn't worth our serious attention for long. Though I'm willing to admit that the blob provided me with a scared moment or two in its earliest incarnations, I am one who eagerly tested himself in childhood against the horrors of "The Bat" and "The Cat and the Canary," and in "Alien" my health had far more to fear from boredom than from heart failure.

Ridley Scott, the director, and Dan O'Bannon, the author of the screenplay, have evidently counted on gaining our interest by an overwhelming display of technological hardware aboard Nostromo, but even in this respect their imaginations have been quick to desert them; once we leave the shiny plastic pocketa-pocketa computer room, in which a mind-bank called Mother raps out her commands in big print on closed-circuit-TV screens, we find ourselves in what *seem to be the oily brass bowels of a* submarine dating back to the Second World War. The spaceship is said to be carrying millions of tons of ore to ore-starved earth, but never a teaspoonful of the precious stuff do we see, nor are we ever told what kind of ore it is. The time is the distant future, but the crew wears clothing, eats food, and uses swear words very like those currently to be met with in Times Square. If these parallels are intended to serve as a commentary on the unchangingness of man's nature, then ho-hum.

In the light of the fact that the plot of "Alien" consists almost entirely of the slobs attempting to track down the blob and the blob quickly dispatching them, the cast has little to do but remain awake, and even this professional requirement appears in some cases to have presented difficulties. In her starring role as the one human survivor aboard Nostromo, Sigourney Weaver, however, is pleasant to look at and pleasant to listen to, and I think it's safe to assume that she and Jones landed safely on our planet and lived happily ever after. Among the blob's victims are Tom Skerritt, Veronica Cartwright, Harry Dean Stanton, John Hurt, and Yaphet Kotto. The music is by Jerry Goldsmith, and the photography is by Derek Vanlint. Many experts have supplied the special effects, which are wonderful and yet less wonderful than we would have thought them a few short years ago. I wonder if the ease with which we become jaded by wonders isn't a part of the unchangingness of man's nature.



"They're all relatives and friends of the boss."

"NEWSFRONT" is a modest, dogged, and not very sunny movie by the Australian director Phillip Noyce. It sets out to be a sort of valedictory tribute to the cameramen and editors who, in Australia as in this country, furnished newsreels to movie houses in the good old days of the forties and fifties, before TV, with its uncanny speed and mobility, rendered newsreels technologically and economically obsolete. The tribute is interesting, in part because Mr. Noyce has made clever use of much authentic newsreel footage, but again and again we are taken on long detours through the tiresome personal life of the fictional cameraman-hero, who is a middle-aged Catholic, married, with more children than he knows what to do with, uneasy in his infidelities, and in trouble with the local Church authorities because of his liberal political views. This hero in bed—plump, pink-skinned, and almost always extremely bored-looking—would bring any movie to a halt; he is worth observing only when he is risking his life on assignments, helping to break in a young Cockney assistant, or quarrelling with his superiors in the office. In the end, just as he is about to hand in his resignation, with a dim hope of being able to undertake a new career elsewhere, he is invited to cover the 1956 Olympics for his newsreel company, and he silently suppresses his resignation. Given his knowledge of the declining fortunes of the company, this is a foolish gesture and provides a disconcerting climax to the movie. Mr. Noyce has made every effort to tell his small story honestly, and except for a profusion of twenty-five-year-old cars there is little to gladden the eye in "Newsfront." Indeed, I have rarely seen so many ugly people crowded into a single movie. The men are graceless, and the women all seem to have drippy noses. Something must be rhinologically amiss Down Under. —B.G.

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Please be advised that a new procedure will be used for reporting conflicts. Students will complete a three-part conflict form and return it to the faculty member in classes in which conflicts exist. Two-thirds of this form will then be submitted to you by the faculty member. You in turn will prepare an envelope which will contain a copy of the conflict exam. Attached to this should be the lower one-third of the conflict exam form. Please return the remaining one-third of the form to my office.

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Wait till the I.R.S. discovers Fanelli!

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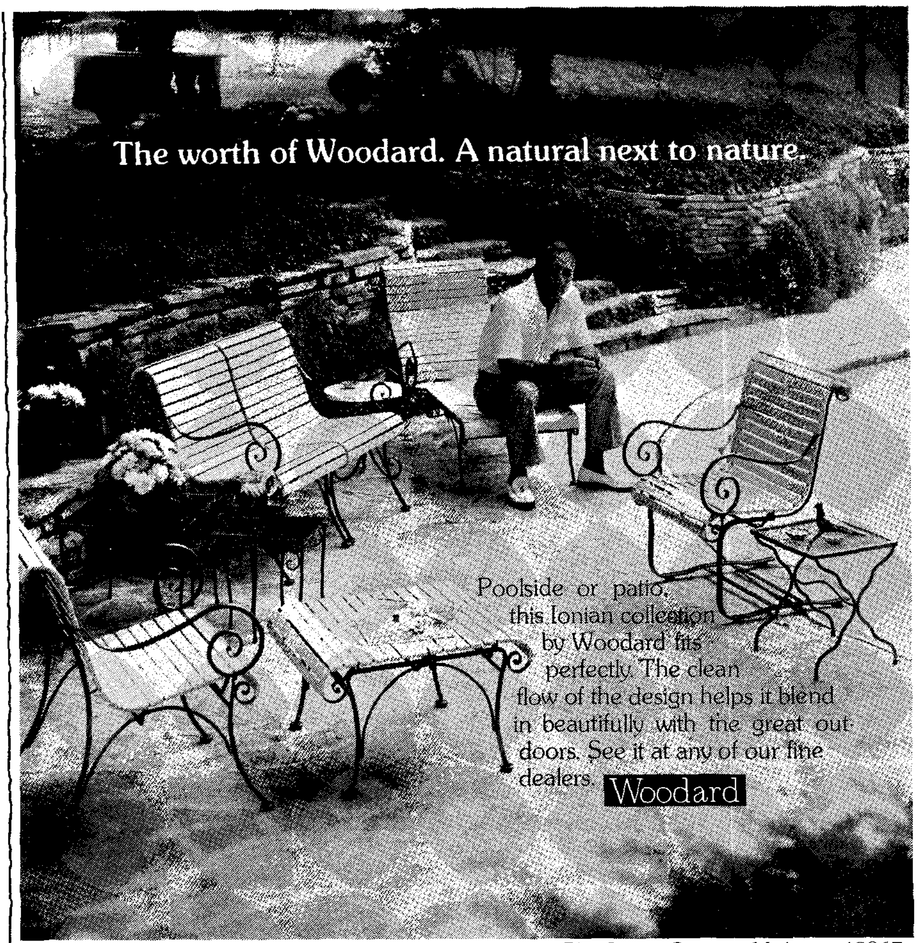
DEPT. OF STRAIGHT THINKING

[*From the Chicago Sun-Times*]

"The thing that really protects women is that they just don't drink as heavily as men do," Guze said. "If women drank as heavily as men do, there presumably would be a lot more alcoholism among women."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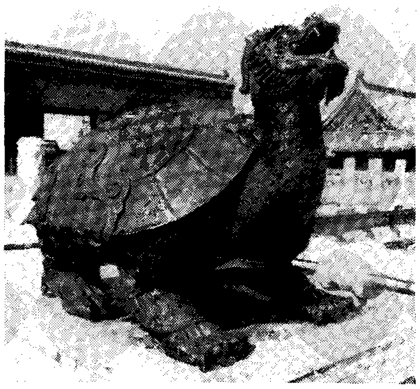
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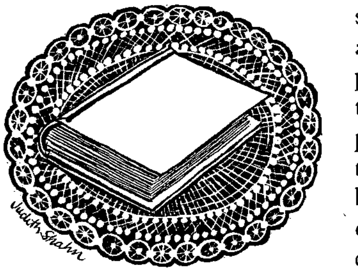
BOOKS

The Cuckoo and the Rooster

Edmund Wilson and Vladimir Nabokov both valued literature above all else, and friendship between them flourished and then foundered on the basis of this shared trait. "Our conversations have been among the few consolations of my literary life through these last years," Wilson wrote Nabokov in 1945. "I simply must see you both," Nabokov wrote in 1943 to Wilson and his then wife, Mary, "I miss you a lot." The warmth of these averrals was not unusual in the first decade of their correspondence, which has been collected as "The Nabokov-Wilson Letters: Correspondence Between Vladimir Nabokov and Edmund Wilson, 1940-1971," edited, annotated, and with an introductory essay by Simon Karlinsky (Harper & Row; $15). Wilson died in 1972 and Nabokov in 1977; their widows, Elena Wilson and Véra Nabokov, have helped Mr. Karlinsky assemble and elucidate the letters, more than half of which date from before 1950. After 1957, the excited, entertaining exchanges between the two men fell away as if in anticipation of their public battle over Nabokov's translation of "Eugene Onegin" (1964) and the final, bitter break occasioned by a few pages of reminiscence in Wilson's "Upstate" (1971) and sealed by Nabokov's letter to the *Times* icily characterizing Wilson as his "former friend" ("I am aware that my former friend is in poor health but in the struggle between the dictates of compassion and those of personal honor the latter wins"). So it is good to have, even in a dust jacket that looks like butcher's paper, this ample record of a former friendship between two polymathic, intensely committed minds and drolly stubborn, cagey personalities. If the letters of writers are to be published at all (and it seems there is no stopping it, as our zeal for "people" and our impatience with intellectual and artistic constructs conspire to unmask all who during their lifetimes presumed to the title of fabricator), then an epistolary dialogue such as this is an energetic and coherent way to package them. And this package is blessed in its editor, a professor of Slavic able to footnote with authority and a fine thoroughness the copious quibbling between the two men as one sought to educate the other in Russian and its versification while the other provided like services in English, amid much mutual one-upping in French. Dr. Karlinsky, for instance, has troubled to discover that the later editions of Nabokov's "Bend Sinister" and "Pnin" failed to adjust a number of solecisms that Wilson had kindly listed, and that Wilson reprinted unaltered a translation and interpretation of Pushkin that Nabokov had laboriously, eloquently corrected. Both the correspondents, tireless devotees of linguistic fine points, would have relished their editor's scrupulous rigor, if not always agreed with his adjudications.



The first letter in the correspondence was composed by Nabokov in 1940, a few months after he had landed in this country, and simply stated that his cousin Nicolas had suggested he get in touch with Wilson. Wilson at that time was literary editor at *The New Republic*, and within a few more months was accepting material the Russian émigré had composed in English, giving him a few lessons in editorial usage, and sending him small checks. Before the year was out, Nabokov wrote in gratitude, "It is really wonderful to be living at last in a country where there is a market for such things." Wilson, with only a shadowy idea of the brilliant body of work Nabokov had created in Russian, was in truth immensely helpful and encouraging to the immigrant. He not only accepted articles and translations for *The New Republic* but recommended Nabokov's work to Edward Weeks of *The Atlantic Monthly* and James Laughlin of New Directions, both of whom liked and accepted it, and he guided Nabokov into *Partisan Review*, *Decision*, the New York *Sun*, and *The New Yorker*. "You *are* a magician," Nabokov wrote Wilson in gratitude, and, again, "The magic of your approbation always works." Wilson liked "The Real Life of Sebastian Knight" ("It's absolutely enchanting. It's amazing that you should write such fine English prose and not sound like any other English writer") better, it turned out, than any of Nabokov's subsequent novels in English, and on the other side Nabokov found much to praise in Wilson's fledgling efforts to read and write about Russian literature, in Wilson's Cyrillic handwriting ("Your hand in Russian is absolutely Russian—I almost am inclined to doubt that you wrote out those lines yourself"), and in Wilson's constant production ("I liked both your verse and your prose enormously"). Nabokov assures his American chum that "this is not a case of 'кукушка хвалить пѣтуха,' " referring to the Ivan Krylov fable "The Cuckoo and the Rooster," which ends:

> Why then, without fear of blame
> Does the cuckoo praise the rooster?
> Because he praises the cuckoo.

Each man had something to offer the other. Wilson knew his way around the American literary scene, and Nabokov knew the Russian language and its literature. Two scarcely precedented experiments were being simultaneously carried out in those early forties—a distinguished American critic was attempting to master the language of Tolstoy and Chekhov, and a virtuoso Russian stylist was attempting to become a writer in the land of Hemingway and Faulkner. As Dr. Karlinsky's introduction points out, Wilson and Nabokov had a great deal in common: "Both were at home in French literature and language. Both had a skeptical, albeit divergent, view of religion and mysticism. Both were sons of jurists who were involved in politics." Both were the children of wealthy homes, and both had fallen on hard times financially; it is surprising and, by today's inflationary lights, touching to read of the grudging advances and slippery lectureships the two men schemed to obtain. When Nabokov complains, "I am underpaid here in a ridiculous and insulting manner," Wilson responds with "You can't be any more broke than I am—I have never been so badly in debt in my life." Both were pedants but not academics, instructors above all of themselves; both were mavericks and non-joiners, combative and uncompromising in their critical estimations. Both men took pride in being frank about what mattered, and nearly from the start the friendliness of their letters has to surmount such abrasive opening lines as "I am going to steal an hour from Gogol and thrash out this matter of Russian versification, because you are as wrong as can be" (Nabokov) and "I was rather disappointed in *Bend Sinister*,

"I'm just moved to say, Edith, that I think you've made an outstanding corporate wife."

about which I had had some doubts when I was reading the parts you showed me, and I will give you my opinion, for what it is worth" (Wilson). Their disagreements about versification seem derived from a serene and mutual deafness. Their disagreements about politics stem from Wilson's willingness to peer with some sympathy into Russian historical events that for Nabokov are absolutely damnable: "Any changes that took place between November 1919 and now have been changes in the decor which more or less screens an unchanging black abyss of oppression and terror." Their disagreements about literary reputations are, as Wilson remembered them in "Upstate," "really intellectual romps, sometimes accompanied by mauling;" Wilson seems more amused than surprised when Nabokov indignantly routs a Wilsonian favorite like Malraux ("quite a third-rate writer"), Faulkner ("quite impossible biblical rumblings"), or Henry James ("that pale porpoise and his plush vulgarities"), and he falls rather silent when a nominee like Jane Austen or Dickens is accepted into Nabokov's willful little pantheon. As long as an educational process was going on, the correspondence survived its quarrels and lapses—with Nabokov, my unexpected impression was, the more eager and open student of the two. It was Nabokov who initiated the relationship, and it was Nabokov who, in 1971, long after the "Eugene Onegin" furor, attempted to patch it up, writing from Montreux, "A few days ago I had the occasion to reread the whole batch . . . of our correspondence. It was such a pleasure to feel again the warmth of your many kindnesses, the various thrills of our friendship, that constant excitement of art and intellectual discovery."

Without minimizing the kindnesses and excitements that Wilson contributes, this reviewer found Nabokov's letters the more alive and giving, certainly the more poetic and dense. Librarians in a quandary are hereby advised to shelve this book under "N;" Edmund Wilson's shelf of opinion, autobiography, and belles-lettres is already loaded to overflowing, and in reading his letters to Nabokov we are frequently conscious of how much else awaited attention on his desk. He quotes a letter to him from a certain Polly Boyden as saying, "I read Nabokov's *Gogol* by accident and liked it so much I bought the *Sebastian Knight*. I think Nabokov is more inescapably the artist than anyone I have ever met personally and it chilled my blood . . ." This is the sort of unstinting recognition which Wilson never quite accords his faithful correspondent, praising Nabokov's early English prose, the memoirs of "Speak, Memory," and the sad comedy of "Pnin" yet resisting the charm of much else and, shockingly, reporting of "Lolita" that "I like it less than anything else of yours I have read . . . Nasty subjects may make fine books; but I don't feel you have got away with this." After "Lolita," the relationship ceases to be comfortable. The letters grow less frequent, with shorter paragraphs. The men write hastily of get-togethers that rarely come off. By the fifties, Nabokov is established as a *New Yorker* contributor and a Cornell professor, and moving ahead on his own. It did not escape his notice that America's foremost critic, while cordial and generous in private, never gave him the public approbation that would have been useful. In his rebuttal of Wilson's adverse review of "Onegin" (which Nabokov had once proposed they translate together!), the Russian with svelte irony remembers:

> When I first came to America a quarter of a century ago, he wrote to me, and called on me, and was most kind to me in various matters, not necessarily pertaining to his profession. I have always been grateful to him for the tact he showed in not reviewing any of my novels while constantly saying flattering things about me in the so-called literary circles where I seldom revolve.

Wilson's often-promised "étude un peu approfondie which I hope to *consacrer à votre oeuvre*" never materialized—

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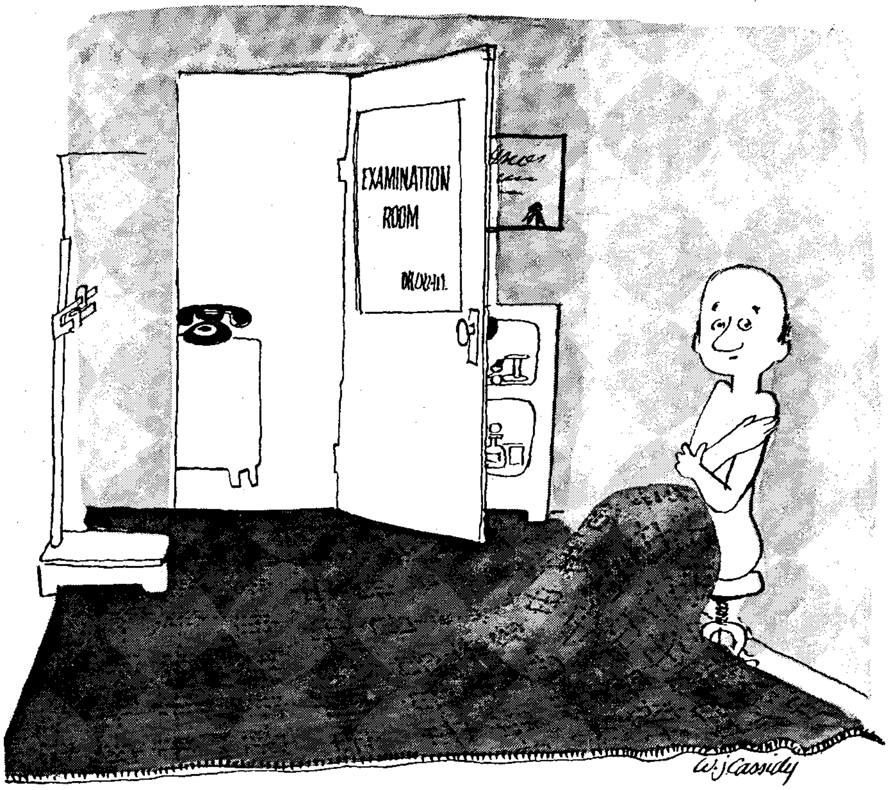

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which, in view of the incidental remarks he did let drop in print, was perhaps fortunate. He had a good eye for what was defective or lopsided in Nabokov, but a somewhat tin ear for the unique music this "inescapably" artistic man could strike from anything. Even that first, stiff letter of self-introduction has a Nabokovian touch, a flirt of natural observation: "I am staying with friends in Vermont (goldenrod and wind, mostly), but shall be back in New York in the second week of September." In the letters that follow, Nabokov apologizes for his "imitation English" and laments that "I am too old to change Conradically"—itself a jest of genius. By the time he has completed his first native book ("Sebastian Knight" was composed in Europe), his American prose is bumptious: "My Gogol book is out, and I have asked good old Jay to mail you a copy. Its brilliancy is due to a dewy multitude of charming little solecisms." So confident of the brilliancy, he never worried about the solecisms, and his final verdict on his Conradical accomplishment is "Conrad knew how to handle *readymade* English better than I; but I know better the other kind. He never sinks to the depths of my solecisms, but neither does he scale my verbal peaks." Nabokov's cheerful arrogance was a form of exhilaration, and his letters, like his art, display a flying factuality that creates a sensation of multiple overlay which is dizzying. Here is a Colorado peak he tossed up, or laid down, for Wilson in 1951, when "Lolita" was brewing in him:

> I went to Telluride (*awful* roads, but then—endless charm, an old-fashioned, absolutely touristless mining town full of most helpful, charming people—and when you hike from there, which is 9000′, to 10000′, with the town and its tin roofs and self-conscious poplars lying toylike at the flat bottom of a *cul-de-sac* valley running into giant granite mountains, all you hear are the voices of children playing in the streets—delightful!) for the sole purpose, which my heroic wife who drove me through the floods and storms of Kansas did not oppose, of obtaining more specimens of a butterfly I had described from eight males, and of discovering its female. I was wholly successful in that quest, finding all I wanted on a steep slope high above Telluride—quite an enchanted slope, in fact, with hummingbirds and humming moths visiting the tall green gentians that grew among the clumps of a blue lupine, *Lupinus parviflorus*, which proved to be the food plant of my butterfly.

A friendship that lived by language died by language. It was not politics that created lasting animosity, it was not even their differing opinions of

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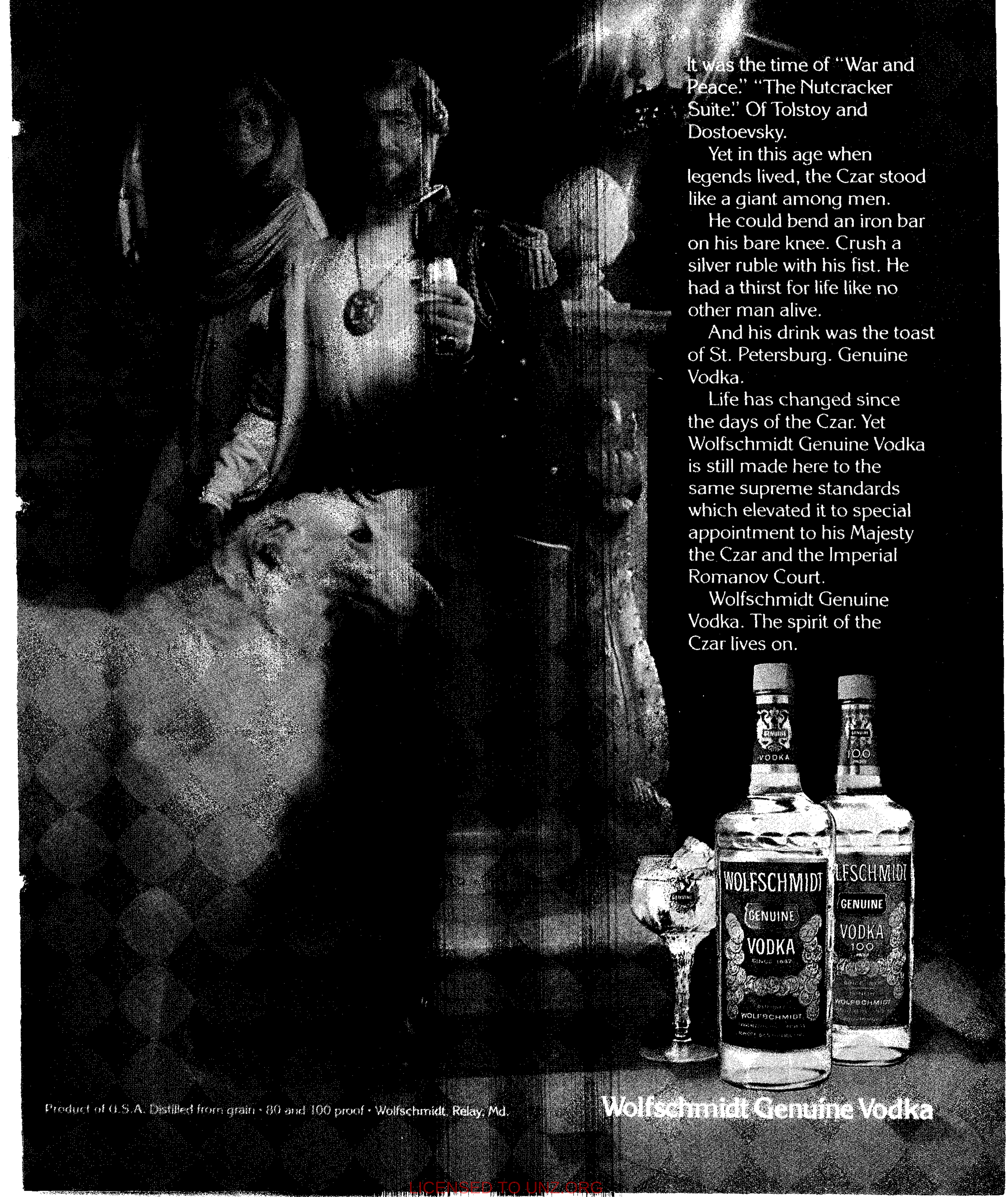

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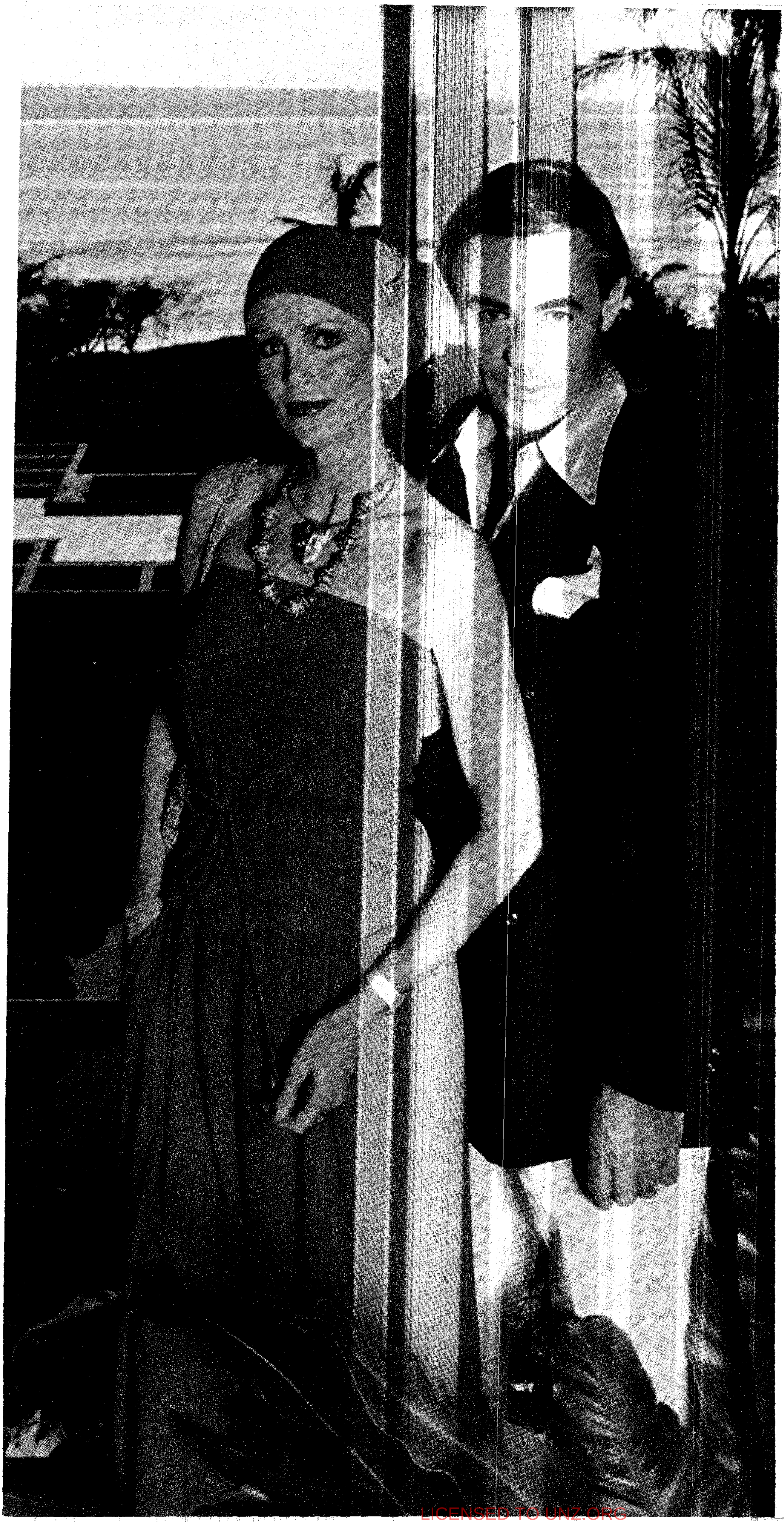

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Mann and Gorky; it was Russian words like *netu*, *vse*, *zloy*, and *pochuya*, English words like "curvate," "habitude," "dit," "gloam," "scrab," and "mollitude," all of which figure in the great "Onegin" debate. In "Upstate," made ready for publication in the shadow of his death, Wilson recalls with rancor that Nabokov doubted his information "that *fastidieux* in French meant *tiresome* and not *fastidious*, and . . . declared with emphasis—contrary to the authority of Dahl, the great Russian lexicographer—that *samodur* had anything in common with the root of *durak*. He tried to tell me . . . that *nihilist* in English was pronounced *neehilist*." From recounting these indignities Wilson went on to say that "the element in his work that I find repellent is his addiction to *Schadenfreude* ['malicious joy']." Nabokov had the last tweaked word by agreeing, in a final letter to the *Times*, with a suggestion that "*Schadenfreude*, as used by Mr. Wilson, really means 'hatred of Freud.' "

—JOHN UPDIKE

BRIEFLY NOTED

FICTION

THE YEAR OF THE FRENCH, by Thomas Flanagan (Holt, Rinehart & Winston; $12.95). In August of 1798, a handful of French troops, propelled by *esprit* left over from their own Revolution, landed on the north coast of County Mayo in support of the Society of United Irishmen, a shaky union of Catholic and Protestant peasants and farmers who—unlike the vast majority of their bigoted compatriots—could see, beyond all their differences, one common enemy: their British overlords, represented locally by a sizable military force. After winning a battle (to everyone's surprise), these oddly coupled underdogs were routed by the British, who sent the French packing and butchered the Irish. Three months earlier—when the rebellion was in full swing in the south and could have used some veteran soldiers and shrewd strategists to rally the sullen populace and keep the more savage extremists in line—the French might have done some good. But Thomas Flanagan devotes little of the novel (his first) to might-have-beens. His concern is the way this episode fitted an age-old pattern: it was not the first time that Ireland had attempted to behave like a nation but found herself bogged down in her own fanaticism and sloth. His narrative is slow go-

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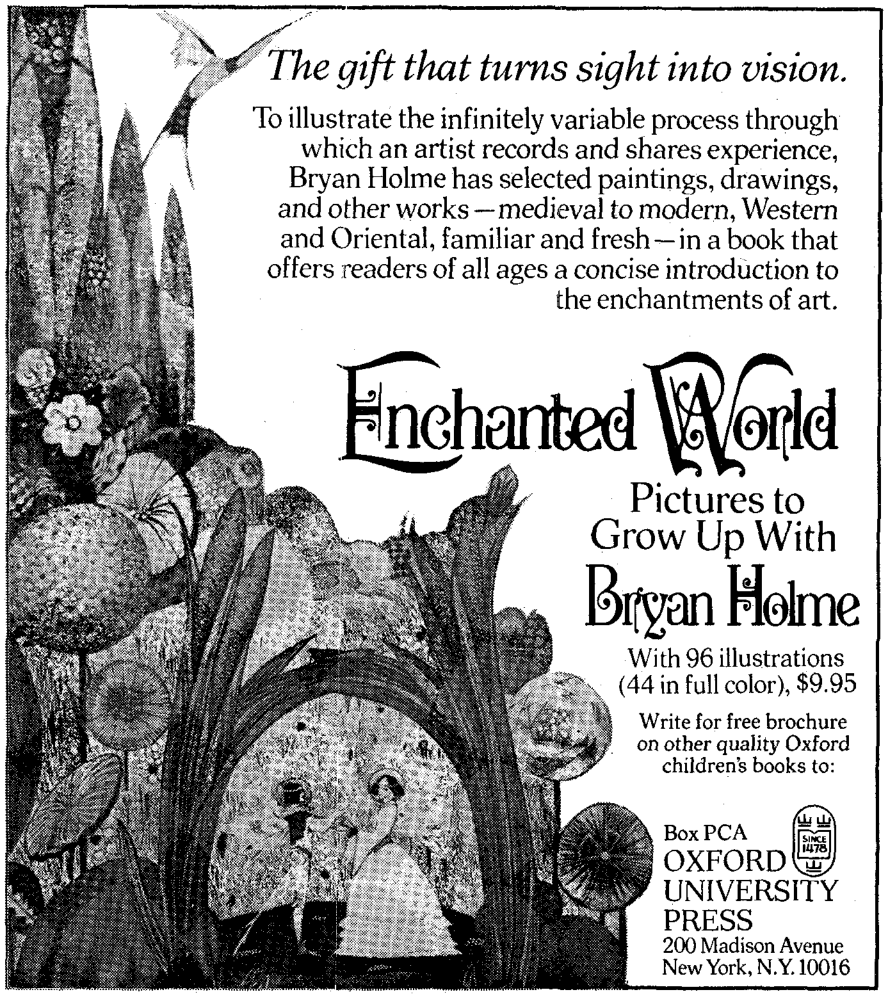
ing—he writes extensive eyewitness reports in the style of the day—but decidedly worth the effort. Most interesting are the portraits of a handful of Irishmen—a poet, a minister, a scholar—who had read enough history to fear that the United Irishmen were a hopeless contradiction in terms. A Book-of-the-Month Club selection.

WHEN THE TREE SINGS, by Stratis Haviaras (Simon & Schuster; $9.95). The narrator of this bittersweet novel has assembled a collage of dreams, portraits, and tales to chronicle the end of his childhood in German-occupied Greece during the Second World War and the extinction of his village's ancient way of life: its houses are shelled and ransacked, while torture and starvation decimate the population. The village's fearless guerrilla-style defenders—a band of men and women who call themselves the Mountain Fighters—manage to drive out the Germans, but they are eradicated, after a quarrel with the Allies, "by a squadron of unidentified planes" before they can become a legitimate political power. Before the war, fishing, gardening, and bawdy revelry made up a rough but happy life for the villagers; by the end, the old people have no future and the young will have to leave to find theirs. In one way, however, the story is an optimistic one, about the miraculous resilience of the children of a proud and wily people: amid the bitterest grief, they are determined to have fun and make mischief, if only to infuriate their oppressors. Mr. Haviaras is a poet from a Greek town who came to the United States in 1967; this novel, his first, is lyrical and wry, and the deeds and ideas of his compatriot characters bring to mind a wide array of Greek tragedies and myths.

NOTE: "The Best of Rhys Davies" has been published by David & Charles (North Pomfret, Vermont; $12.95). Many of the stories in the book first appeared in *The New Yorker*. . . . "Days," a collection of short stories by Mary Robison, some of which first appeared in these pages, has been published by Knopf ($8.95).

GENERAL

THE MYTH MAKERS, by V. S. Pritchett (Random House; $8.95). Nineteen essays—book reviews revised into less timely and more harmonious shape—upon as many major fiction-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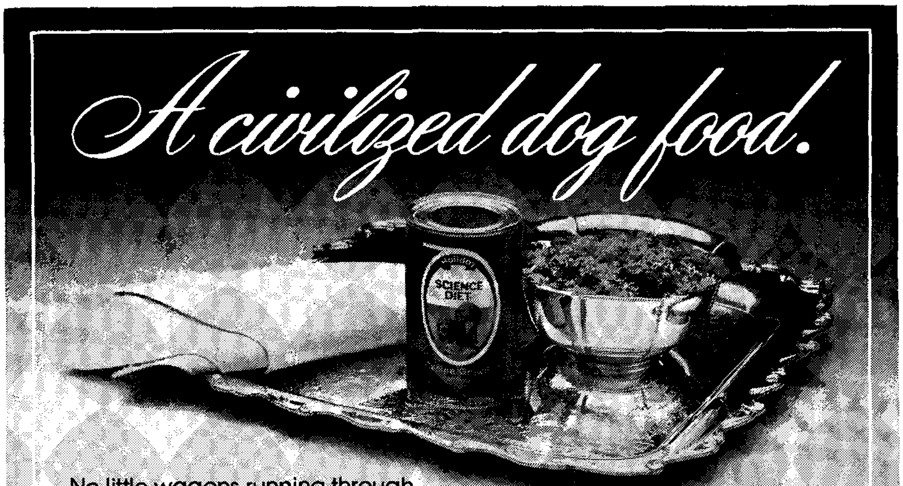
ists, ranging from Stendhal and George Sand to Solzhenitsyn and Gabriel García Márquez, with not an Englishman or an American among them. Mr. Pritchett shows a marvellous acquaintance with literature as both a body of works and a branch of professional activity, and he walks among the mighty spirits with the benign authority of an investigating angel, taking puckish notes. Of the Tolstoys' marriage he writes, "Like the Lawrences and the Carlyles, the Tolstoys were the professionals of marriage; they knew they were not in it for their good or happiness, that the relationship was an appointed ordeal, an obsession undertaken by dedicated heavyweights." Of Dostoevski's characters: "Life stories of endless complexity hang shamelessly out of the mouths of his characters, like dogs' tongues, as they run by." Great compression and wit attend these observations; e.g., "A scene of Oriental luxury was indispensable to the Romantics: the looting of Egypt was Napoleon's great gift to literature." Mr. Pritchett's ease in the ballrooms of history is absolute. He greets each master by the hand and, while seeming to make small talk, elicits from all the essence of their personalities; for García Márquez, he sees, "life is ephemeral but dignified by fatality," and the nineteenth-century Spaniard Perez Galdos is complimented: "The fact is that Galdos accepts human nature without resentment." Criticism this humane, precise, and unpedantic freshens the classics like a morning breeze.

CHINA SCAPEGOAT: THE DIPLOMATIC ORDEAL OF JOHN CARTER VINCENT, by Gary May (New Republic Books; $15.95). The late John Carter Vincent (he died in 1972) joined the American Foreign Service in 1924 and served, mostly in China, with increasing distinction and responsibility; in 1945, he became Assistant Secretary of State for East Asia and the Pacific. In the early fifties, he was hounded out of the government. The proliferation of investigations, hearings, and what-not that he endured is extraordinary, but no authority, despite wild accusations and lax procedures, could ever find Vincent disloyal. In 1953, Secretary of State John Foster Dulles, appeasing the Republican Party's right wing, offered Vincent the option of resigning (which meant that he would receive a pension) for poor judgment as an alternative to



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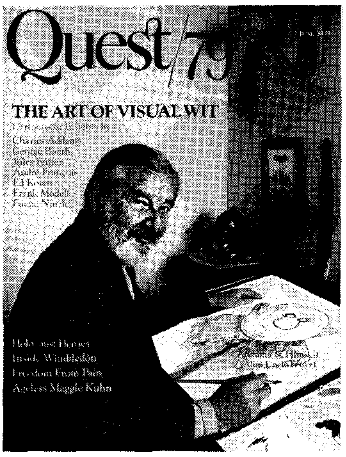

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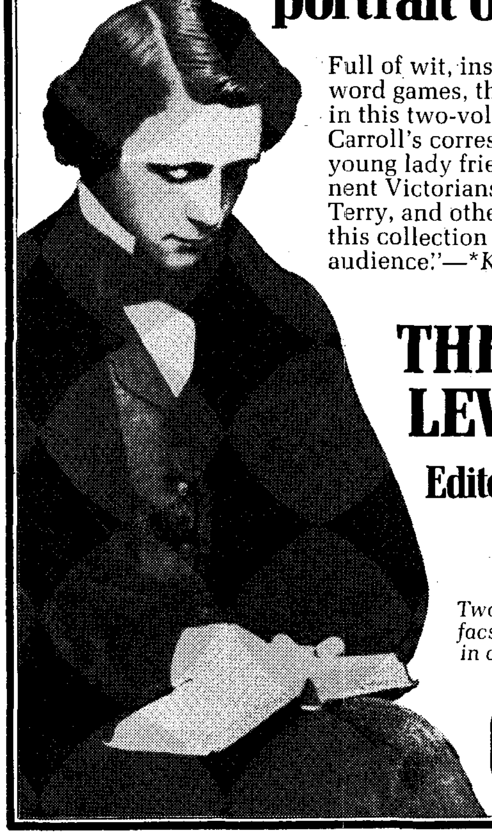

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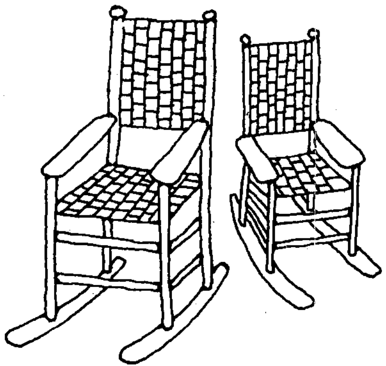

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being fired as a security risk. Mr. May, in examining Vincent's career, decides that his judgment was, if anything, too conservative rather than too radical, and, with hindsight, he suggests (as Vincent did not) that the Chinese Communists could not have been stopped. Vincent's failing, according to his enemies, was to have doubted the effectiveness of Chiang Kai-shek's cruel and corrupt government. It is (again with hindsight) a measure of our national paranoia at that time that an American might be considered disloyal for criticizing a foreigner.

ROCKEFELLER OF NEW YORK: EXECUTIVE POWER IN THE STATEHOUSE, by Robert H. Connery and Gerald Benjamin (Cornell; $15). This is a fascinating study—at least for readers interested in American government—for, while narrating and assessing Nelson Rockefeller's fifteen years in Albany (1959-1974), it also examines the changing role of state governments both in the federal system and in relation to smaller units (counties and cities), as well as the different means by which various states attain similar ends. The authors' sense of the practicalities of local, state, and national government and politics is superb. They believe that because of his wealth Mr. Rockefeller lacked a sense of limits—of the possible—so that, while many of his programs were long since due, he overdid them.

NOTE: Barry Commoner's "The Politics of Energy," much of which first appeared in *The New Yorker*, in somewhat different form, has been published by Knopf ($10 hardcover, $4.95 paper). . . . "Giving Up the Gun: Japan's Reversion to the Sword, 1543-1879," by Noel Perrin, has been published by Godine ($8.95). Much of the contents originally ran in these pages. . . . "Westchester: Portrait of a County," by Alex Shoumatoff, has been published by Coward, McCann & Geoghegan ($9.95). Some of the contents first appeared in this magazine.

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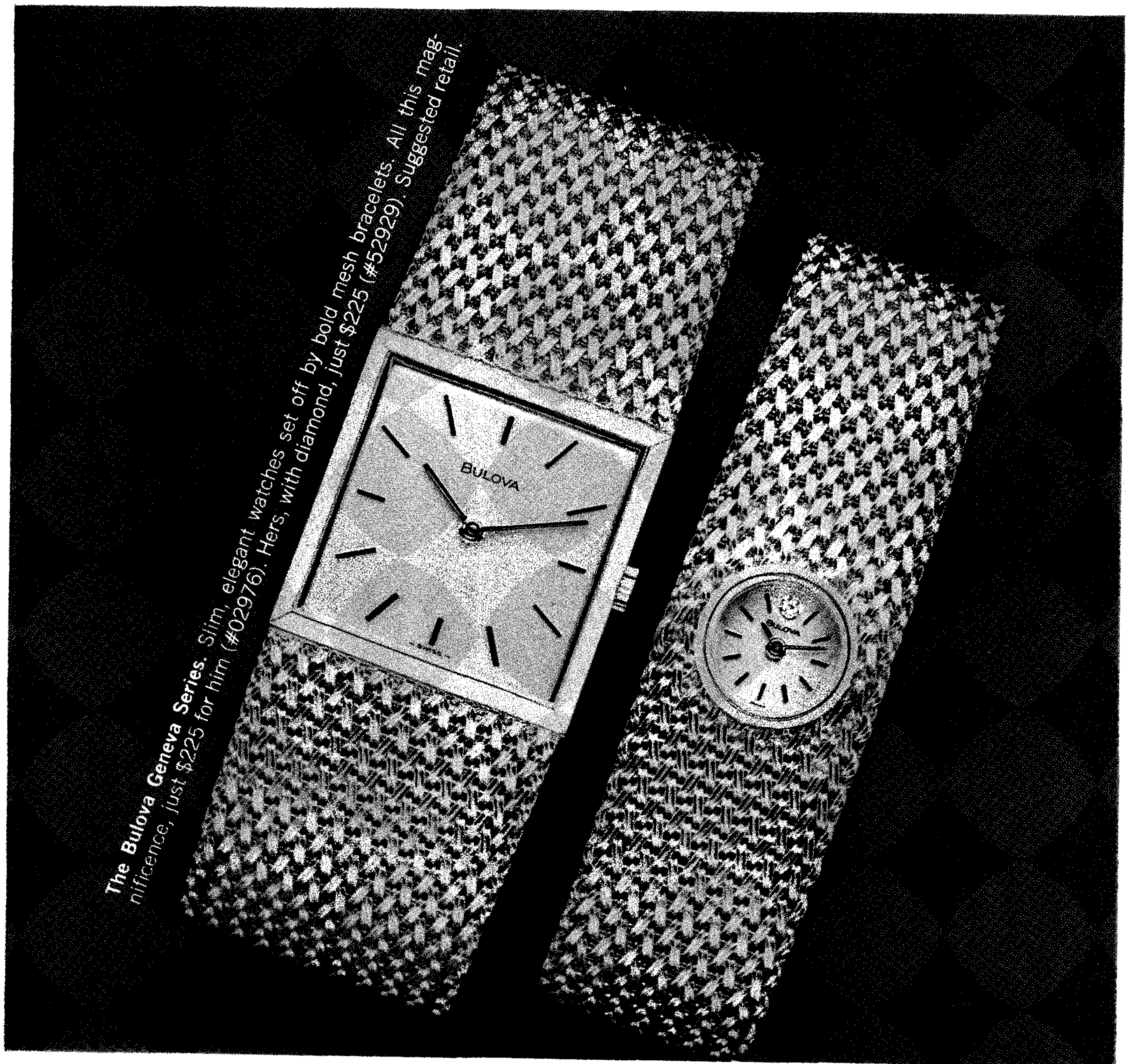
"The report will do a lot of violence, in that the hog futures will go to a sharply inverted price structure, with more discount to the back months than the nearbys," Holbert said. "It will sharply invert the hog board. And the violence is going to spread to the cattle board."—*Los Angeles Times.*

And from there into the streets.



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